

THE
BEGGAR GIRL

AND
Her Benefactors.



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BEGGAR GIRL
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Her Benefactors.

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

BY MRS. BENNETT,

AUTHOR OF *WELCH HEIRESS*, *JUVENILE INDISCRETIONS*, *AGNES DE-COURCY*,
AND *ELLEN COUNTESS OF CASTLE HOWELL*.

—●●●●—

A poem, a drama, a novel, which represents virtue in lively colours, models the reader on the virtuous characters, who act without his perceiving it; they become interesting, and the author inculcates morality without seeming to mention it.

LE MERCIER.

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THE

BEGGAR GIRL.

CHAP. I.

Shewing, among other important Matters, how the Beggar was turned out of Doors; how she got one Friend and lost another; and how fine Ladies manage, whose Attachments are formed without Esteem, and broken without Regret.

THE bed of justice, held by Duke Athelane and the ladies his counsellors, ended as beds of justice formerly did where they were in fashion—the evidence was all on one side, and the edict pronounced by him in whom the power was vested accordingly.

THE BEGGAR GIRL.

The two young ladies agreed that our heroine was a very suspicious character, with this difference:—Miss Angus never saw a more interesting countenance, nor Miss Bruce a more artful one.

The Duke himself had taken very little notice of her person, but he confessed her emotions appeared to him natural enough; however, her residence with Mrs. Woudbe; her appearance, so unlike that of a person admitted to associate with the elegant Countess of Gauntlet; her passing at that hour so close to the house alone, and so ill dressed, were certainly circumstances which gave weight to the suspicion, that there was more of design than accident in the whole.

Elinor's attachment to young Croak was a matter which entirely militated against the Duke's first wish of uniting her to his nephew; that first wish still held so predominant a place in his mind, and he had so ardently pressed it upon Lady Denningcourt, that it was not till she found the poor girl's head unequal to her internal struggle, that she remembered how impossible she had herself found

found it, though blessed with a much stronger mind, to regulate a first passion by the laws of prudence; and though an alliance with a youth very inferior in person and talent to him who made the indelible impression on her own heart, who had not the advantage of education, and, above all, whose blood was plebeian, was not to be thought on, yet there were moments when she regretted the impossibility of making her daughter happy her own way. As she did not, however, communicate those regrets to the Duke, he still cherished the hope of seeing all the fortune of the House of Athelane united to the dukedom in the person of Mr. Angus; and not aware of the many channels through which the most important secrets of a great family meander into the world, hoped, when the reason of the unhappy Elinor was restored, of which he had the most sanguine confidence, her first passion would be forgotten, and remain a secret to all but the near friends of the family.

In this hope, the suspicion that Rosa was an agent of the Croaks, very naturally alarmed

him; and as he could never have conceived, from his own feelings, that such a character as a father, callous to the pleadings of nature on behalf of his only child, could exist, he certainly did Doctor Croak the injustice to believe him interested for his son; more especially, as marrying a young person of Elinor's high expectations, would also prevent his ever being troubled about the refund of property vested in him for her sole use. If, indeed, the last consideration had not escaped the wisdom both of the Doctor and his chere amie, the young man would not probably have been eating commons at this time in the Marshalsea prison.

Lady Denningcourt's mental sufferings, on account of Elinor's deranged intellects, were unspeakable: her whole system was unnerved, and the efforts of friends, by whom she was equally loved and respected, to console her under so great a calamity, were vain; the patient endurance of her character, indeed, prevented her wounding them with complaints; but the only real comfort she was capable of enjoying, was that which gave a foretaste of the

the eternal happiness which good actions must ensure to spirits like hers, when her soul sunk in despondent agony, she walked from her house to the village, where the inhabitants thronged round her with blessings.

The Duke of Athelane, a nobleman not more respected on account of his high rank, than beloved for the native urbanity of his mind, entered the library where our heroine was, prejudiced and prejudging, two evils from which the law of the land protects the greatest criminal, but from which the innocent stranger had no appeal.

Rosa, who was now acquainted with the Duke's quality, and who, notwithstanding she had so little reason to compliment her own discernment, having so recently found high virtues were not always concomitants of high rank, had a sort of inherent respect for nobility, and felt awed and confounded; she involuntarily rose at the Duke's entrance; and as his Grace neither seated himself, nor motioned to her to do so, she continued standing.

The Duke, full of his own subject, bluntly asked if she was acquainted with Doctor Croak?

Rosa hesitated and blushed.

Guilty upon honour he thought his Grace. The question was indeed, he said, superfluous. He next presumed she resided at Delworth House.

Again Rosa blushed and hesitated.

Guilty again, thought his Grace.

"I—I have lived there, Sir; but—but——"

"But you have thoughts, I presume, of leaving it."

Rosa's affirmative was decisive.

"And to remove. Perhaps you meant to do us the honour of removing hither?"

It was now only that Rosa perceived the haughty and austere brow of the noble interrogator; and she felt at once confounded, abashed, and distressed:—a thousand sharp points seemed to accompany the rushing blood into her face, neck, and arms.

"You blush:—is it from shame of detection? or, for guilt is very tenacious, I may possibly

possibly have had the misfortune to excite your anger? I do not, however, deprecate the resentment, in which you will have the goodness to leave this house, but you must allow me to add my advice—not to be seen near it again. Lady Denningcourt is a woman of honour, the young ladies under her roof have a character, and the Duke of Athelane is their protector. Permit me (and he offered his hand to conduct her)—I will shew you the way.”

The heart of the poor Beggar swelled almost to bursting, when turned from the house of those who had created an interest so new in her feelings; yet so impressed with respect for the angry judge, who thus passed on her a sentence aggravated by irony and contempt, that she had neither courage to speak nor resist the motion he made of leading her, by a short turning, to a gate which opened to the park; but before she reached it, humbled and mortified as she felt herself, affection and concern for Elinor restored her to spirit and recollection.

A banishment from this tranquil abode was also a banishment from her Elinor, and that, perhaps, for ever. Comparing Betty's incoherent account with what she knew of the disposition of her poor friend, she flattered herself that her soothing and consolements would have more effect than any medical care, and resolved to make an effort of such importance to them both, and however difficult, to summons courage to resist the absolute command of the Duke,—oppose her humble remonstrance to his decided resolution.

Almost suffocated with heat and the variety of her feelings, she took off a little black hat, which confined her hair, and, with a motion of her head and shoulders, both graceful and interesting, threw back the redundant chesnut tresses it liberated, and inhaled the air before she could attempt to speak.

The Duke viewed her with fixed attention; and the severity of his look, by degrees, relaxed into a curious and not displeased scrutiny of her features; he nevertheless motioned

tioned to proceed towards the gate, but stopped when she spoke.

“ If affection did not impel, if friendship did not support me, I could not, believe me Sir, presume, on my own account, to deprecate the severity you think I deserve. I venerate the character of Lady Denningcourt; but sure, with those monuments of her goodness and charity before me, it is not necessary to say how *much* I venerate her; yet, perhaps, all who admire and respect her, cannot feel the sentiment which at this moment——but I cannot explain it—it is indefinable even to myself. The young ladies, happy under her roof, and safe under the protection of the Duke of Athelane, can never be injured by mere sufferance of a poor unprotected, unallied, unhappy——”

Her voice failed—she stepped forward to conceal her tears; and having a little recovered, finding the Duke had remained in the same place, turned back with a grace which was the peculiar character of her every movement; the waving tresses of her fine hair, shading her fair forehead; a tear on each

glowing cheek; her hat in one hand, the other open palm modestly spread in an attitude of humble remonstrance; an earnest but melancholy meaning impressed on every speaking feature.

“Have I asked, Sir, to be admitted to the society of these happy ladies? alas! no;—I know and feel the humble distance at which poverty and distress place me; *my* honour and *my* innocence is the honour and innocence of a friendless child of penury;—it is known only to God, and felt only by myself, and is of too obscure and humble a texture to claim even a candid judgment;—congenial principles cannot assimilate in uncongenial rank and circumstance—that is a hard lesson, with which I have long become familiar; therefore I gaze at humble distance on the radiant virtues I am not for that reason less emulous to imitate; and do not expect, nor even desire, that the ladies under the Duke of Athelane’s protection, should descend from their high rank, and higher honour; all I petition for, and I conjure you, Sir, as you regard that dear girl, whose derangement I so deeply

deeply deplore, do not refuse me—I would kneel—I *will* kneel—mine is the humiliation of the heart—and it bends before you ;—do not deny me—let me watch my Elinor—let me try whether the soothing of friendship will not have more efficacy than the art of medicine ; you know not, my Lord, how she loved me—how I love her.”

“ Do you know the cause of her disorder ? ”

“ I am afraid I do, my Lord, know the cause to which it is attributed ; but it may be the effect of more causes than one. The sudden change in her life, new claims on her affection, an entire new system of existence, a total subversion of her old habits and connections, the objects long dear to sight and memory lost, and replaced by others, which however preferable in themselves, are not endeared to her. These, irritated by a latent attachment, to which her feelings had not given a name, nor stamped a character, has been, I doubt not, the united causes of her disorder.”

This hint was precisely that most acceptable to the Duke ; and the grace and energy

of the fair pleader were irresistible;—there was in her manner, as John would perhaps have said,

“A prone and speechless dialect,

“Such as move men;”

and in her features a combination so familiar to the Duke, that when (her whole heart in her eyes) she besought him to grant her petition, he answered, after a long and earnest examination of her countenance, by bluntly asking of what country she was?

Again the deep glow tinged her skin; yet the confusion was transient. She had owned the obscurity of her circumstances, and conscious that no inquisition could discover an action to her dishonour, answered, Effex.

“Effex!” repeated the Duke;—“and how old?”

“Twenty, my Lord.”

“What! the age of Elinor?”

“Yes, my Lord!”—and inspired by a ray of hope, which his softened look confirmed,

“—— we grew together,

“Like to a double cherry seeming parted,

“But an union in partition.”

“But

"The Duke half smiled. "You quote from high authority."

"I quote like a parrot, Sir—what I have heard repeated from the heart of true affection;—but suffer me to quote *your* high authority, my Lord, for returning to my friend."

"And how would you manage with your other friends? my authority would not excuse you there, for so rude and indecent a lapse of orderly behaviour, as remaining out late, without apprising them why and where you stay—the sun, you see, is setting; and we are not on habits of friendship with that family."

Rosa could not, without intruding a long story on the Duke, and betraying her friend, explain to him how lately she had in some degree prepared the family at Delworth for such a lapse; she therefore remained silent—vexation and disappointment on her brow, which the Duke was earnestly reading.

"I

"I am tempted to confess a great weakness to you," said he, "if I thought you would not expose me."

Rosa looked surprised, and rather alarmed.

"It is this," he continued :—"within the last half hour I disliked you extremely, notwithstanding you are so handsome; that dislike was therefore the result of considering you, as, at best, I fear you are, a suspicious character; and though you have given me no proof to the contrary, except talking very prettily, and looking not handsomer, but more interesting, I feel myself disposed to take your beauty, and a resemblance you certainly have, come from where you will, to the amiable foundress of those charities, as a security for your integrity, though I know one is the common trait of deceit, and the other the certain effect of chance."

Rosa's alarm vanished. "If you knew, my Lord, how you flatter me——"

"Yes, you may well be flattered, if all your conquests are so sudden and so sure."

"Have I, then, conquered, my Lord? and will you lead me back to my friend?"

The

The Duke paused. "No," said he, "I am enslaved like an old man, but I will not be duped like one. Allow me to give you a good evening ;—I shall talk the affair over with Lady Denningcourt, without concealing how much you resemble her, which alone will convince her I am not your foe ; we shall make our arrangements, and depend on it you will hear of them."

What now could Rosa do but accept the Duke's offered hand, and suffer him to lead her to the park ; where, after he returned to the house, considering it would be very late to go to the village, and perhaps indulging a secret presentiment that there would not, after the Duke's promised conversation with Lady Denningcourt, be a necessity for her going there at all, she cast a fond look behind, and returned to Delworth.

Crossing a court yard, in order to go to her chamber by the back way, she observed a great number of imperials, boxes, &c. and suspected, what had really happened, the bride elect and her party were arrived.

She

She had ascended only a few of the back-stairs when the house-maid, who gave her the letter in the afternoon, informed her, that as the house was now very full, and more company expected, and, as besides, their young Lord's intended Lady's woman chose to sleep near her Lady, the house-keeper had ordered the things to be removed from the room where she had heretofore slept into one of the little garrets.

"The garret!" repeated Rosa.

"Yes, 'em; 'cause, 'em, she supposes, 'em, you will not be long here, 'em."

Rosa had turned half round, resolving, by immediately quitting the house, to avoid further insult; but recollecting that she was to depend on hearing from the Duke, and that he would naturally send to Delworth, she resolved, at the risk of all possible endurance, to wait the result, and followed the girl into a small, low-roofed room on the attic story; where all the things she left in her chamber were crowded, and where, squeezing herself by the bed to the one ricketty chair, she sat down, pale, and almost breathless.

The

The girl said, as she had no dinner, no wonder she was faint; but to-morrow—

“To-morrow!” repeated Rosa—“I trust I shall not pass another day in this house.”

Dear heart! the girl wondered at that, as there was going to be fitch grand, new-fangled doings; but come on’t what would, she would run and ax the house-steward for a glass of wind and some biscuits, for folk were not to be starved, if they did go to kept-madams.

Rosa never was in greater need of refreshment; but though her body was not less fatigued and faint than her mind was agitated, she heartily regretted not going on to Denningcourt village; for no place could be more comfortless or disagreeable than the garret, to which she was consigned.

The girl returned with her hands full. “There,” said she, “is a whole bottle of *Whydontee* wind, and a manchet, and some biscuits;—no need of axing about the matter, wind and ale is as plenty all over our ouse now as water; and you would be fit to die a laughing—they are all as joyous in sarvants’

servants' all, as if the wedding-day was this minute. There's one of the strange footmen taken off one Madam Feversham."

"Feversham! is Mrs. Feversham here?"

"Yes, 'em;—our house will be like the inn at Denningcourt—quite a Noak's hark. And so the footman—I shall know his name at supper—he is so monstrous droll;—he sees Madam Feversham was all bedizened like an old ewe dressed lamb-fashion; and the old gentleman too—quite a smart old Grecian—what does he do but chuck me under the chin, as funny as you please;—I wonder what Madam Feversham would say to that?—but come, 'em, let's be sociable (and drawing the cork, she first drank a glass of *Whydootie* herself, and then helped Rosa) and now, 'em," said she, squatting herself on the side of the bed, "I'll tell you a few secrets. Our family are going to Old Nick as fast as they can drive; our Lord's over head and ears in debt to all the rich tenants, and so hard-hearted to the poor, and raises their rents so, they can't pay;—so they were ready to go wild with joy when the lawyer came down

to

to injunct them all not to pay our steward; and so, without the bride's portion, Lord knows how we should all get back to Pall-mall again. Oh, London, London!—Lord, I am so dry!—but London's the place for my money! though there's Old Nick to pay there too;—there's Lady Lowder, and that handsome Sir Jacob, only our folk don't want it mentioned just now, 'cause 'tis a disparagement to the bride; but her husband says as he'll put 'em in the Commons, unless the old gentleman comes down."

Mrs. Modely at this instant threw open the door, and scowling under her curved brow, at the girl, the wine, and Rosa, ordered the latter to follow her to her lady.

Perhaps it was not an absolute miracle, that though the beauty of the lovely Countess of Gauntlet was, with the aid of a little art, stationary, experience should have so increased her natural talent for intrigue, she was at this period an over-match for Sir Solomon Mushroom himself, who, of all her dear and particular friends, was him against whom she bore the most inveterate hatred,
for

for reasons it is time to unfold to our readers.

The first hint the Earl, and of course his beautiful Countess, received of the existence of their nephew, was from the best lawyer in Great Britain; her ladyship's rosy lips fevered on this occasion with execrations on the duplicity of their agent Sir Solomon Mushroom, and on herself if she did not revenge it.

The Earl now regretted he had declined the alliance of the greatest scoundrel in the world;—the Countess, with equal sincerity, wished the Earl of Denningcourt had never been introduced to the Mushrooms:—to these regrets succeeded a resolution, by breaking off one treaty to make way for another, and with other rules of conduct to be observed at this critical period, preceded the writing a card requesting to see Sir Solomon Mushroom.

Though that profound politician, who like the robber in Gil Blas dealt on the square with all mankind, was already in possession of the secret, and had made his own calculations

lations to profit by the event, preponderate how it would, he chose to be the most astonished person of the three, when he attended his patron, and heard from the Countess what had happened.

“ Did you not tell us this shocking boy was dead, Sir Solomon ?” cried her Ladyship, with bitterness.

“ When, my good Lady ?” answered the knight, with great composure.

“ Certainly, my good friend,” joined the Earl, mildly, “ you gave us room to conclude—”

Sir Solomon collectedly denied the conclusion, and with infinite respect, referred to his letters from Philadelphia.

Lady Gauntlet’s acquired habit of smiling, ill concealed her rage at his triumphant proof of cunning ; but the Earl, with equal wisdom and moderation, delivered it as his decided opinion, that the honour and interest of his good friend Sir Solomon Mushroom, were as much interested as his own, in defeating the claims of the pretended heir.

This

This the knight neither granted nor denied in a manner so lukewarm, as convinced the noble pair, something was rotten in the state:—Lady Gauntlet then artfully dropping a conversation, in which he was not interested, began one on his daughter and her expected marriage, but was astonished to find that too treated with indifference.

The Countess was not a woman to be foiled by cunning; she was not an intimate in Sir Solomon's family, but her woman was; and having learned, within two hours after his departure, that though Mrs. Persian, Miss Mushroom's woman, was one of the best dressers of hair, and layer on of rouge, of any English woman in London, an old family nurse, admitted by stealth, robbed her of one of the first privileges of her place, for she was the exclusive repository of all her young lady's secrets, and with this nurse our Countess instantly became acquainted.

Sir Solomon Mushroom had too many affairs of importance on his mind to remember the unlimited confidence he had formerly reposed in one Dorothy Wright; her memory
however

however was less tenacious—she very well knew the child, whom she had assisted Mr. Hanson in persuading her mistress to carry to America, was the same youth to whom her eldest daughter was attached.

When it did not militate against her own or her children's interest, nothing gave Dorothy more pleasure, than crossing the humour of her old master, and in the confidence that Horace would some time or other turn out a somebody, she had encouraged her daughter to expect the return and advancement of her first love:—as to Lords, since her youngest daughter had married one, and forgot her, Dorothy thought they were no great ketch; but after vain expectation of the somebody's return, Horace was on the point of being given up, both by nurse and Miss, as the former waited only for her daughter's establishment, to demand her own terms of their father, and the latter saw so many charming consequences of being a Countess, that had not Lord Denningcourt been such a lazy woer, she would have infallibly been one herself.

But

But Horace happened to present himself just in the very nick of time, to enquire after the Beggar, with an appearance so elegant, and a demeanour so haughty, as raised the colour in Miss Charlot's cheek, and threw her father into the most profound meditation.

So as Sir Solomon's girls were peereffes, no matter who were the peers ;—he had never forgiven his patron for declining his alliance ; and as in case of a public investigation, if his own immaculate character escaped, it must be by miracle, he wisely determined to secure that, and the fortune and honours of the house of Montreville, in spite of the power of his patron, or the beauty of his lady, by offering to Horace his daughter, and eighty thousand pounds, twenty more than he gave her sister, with some certain *proofs* to be included in the marriage portion.

Of this offer he told his daughter, who understood nothing of the *proofs* ; but she told it her nurse, who comprehended the whole, and, under the influence of a beautiful card purse, respectably filled, *she* again told it to Lady Gauntlet, who knew much more

more of the matter than herself, and who of course was filled with revengeful ire, against the traitor Sir Solomon Mushroom.

It was in the interval between Sir Solomon's offer, and the young gentleman's answer, that the former was summoned to hear of the existence of young Montreville; and it was also then that Lady Gauntlet formed a plan of revenge worthy of herself.

Sir Solomon thought, as his former employer Mr. Whittal was dead, that the secret of the Montreville's rested only in himself; he therefore resolved to make or unmake, as suited his own private interest or humour.

Lady Gauntlet was better informed;—beside Sir Solomon and the communicative Mrs. Dorothy who gratified her own pique by revealing all she knew, save and except the maternal secret of such importance to her daughters, there were two more persons, one of whom she knew, and the other she feared, would arise in evidence against her.

Mr. Whittal, her relation at Belfast, on whom, by her interest, advancement and lu-

crative places had been showered, died, notwithstanding all, insolvent; and his only son, a fine tall handsome Hibernian, appeared at the Earl's levee in very shabby mourning, without sixpence in his pocket, or any means of subsisting like a *gentleman*, except a few secrets confided to him by his father, on his death-bed.

Lady Gauntlet procured this young man a lucrative appointment in the Colonies, and with five hundred guineas in specie to begin the world, he fell down the river Thames in a West India trader.

"I breathe," said her ladyship, "now that horrid fellow is gone."—But this breathing business was rather premature, for though her young relation did certainly sail down the river, yet before the ship reached the Nore, the wind became adverse; he run up to London for one night, staid three, went to half a play, a brothel, and a gaming-house; from the last he returned *minus* in the neat sum of five hundred pounds, besides his watch, buckles and every other portable of value.

In

In this situation, stripped of every thing but the secret entrusted to him by his dying parent, Mr. Patrick Whittal again presented himself at the levee of his relation, the Earl of Gauntlet.

My Lord was at that particular time not only very angry, but very poor, and my lady the same;—notwithstanding which, after a few hours consideration, a second five hundred were advanced; and cousin Whittal swore he would never trouble such kind relations more; that he did not keep his word was not so much his fault as his misfortune, for he set out in a chaise and four from his lordship's door; but the wind having become favourable, the ship, after waiting two tides, had failed without him.

“ Amid the roses, fierce repentance rears her snaky crest.”

This Lady Gauntlet might have owned, had she not been too proud to admit any thing against herself; for cousin Whittal was now on the town, spending the second five hundred with the spirit of an Emperor, and in danger of being superseded in the appointment procured for him

with great trouble and difficulty: This cousin was, however, but one, and not perhaps that most feared, of two evidences which, as soon as the claims of the rightful heir were known, would rise to crush her.

The last time the late Earl of Gauntlet was mentioned, he was ordered to a milder climate for change of air, which is in plain English to say, that the physicians had pocketted fees, without benefitting their patient, till their modesty could do so no longer; and therefore, that the inefficacy of the cart-load of medicines, which they had prescribed, should not be witnessed by the swinish multitude, they rather chose his spirit should be resigned in a foreign land; and accordingly the Earl, his beautiful sister-in-law the honourable Mrs. Montreville, with her as honourable spouse and a splendid retinue, set out for Italy, landed at Leghorn, and so on to Florence, where, in a superb palace, on the banks of the Arno, the Earl flattered himself he was recovering, while basking in the brilliant glances which shot from the

the eyes of his fair sister, he wasted to a shadow.

Lord Vallerton, son to the then aged and respectable Earl of Denningcourt, was minister at the Tuscan court during the residence of the Earl at Florence, and of course, tho' a widower, and father of a fine youth of sixteen, an admirer of her whom all the world admired, till the Duke of Athelane, who, like Lord Gauntlet, retreated to Italy from the universal conqueror, and like him also, was accompanied by a beautiful female companion in a palace on the banks of the Arno, caused an alteration in his feelings.

Lady Elinor Athelane was all Mrs. Montreville was not, and Lord Vallerton's heart was very soon really devoted to her.

This being one of the injuries Mrs. Montreville never forgave. The Duke, who visited his invalid countryman, though the ladies were on very distant terms, found the cordiality, with which he was at first received, gradually diminish; and he was on the point of entirely declining his visits, when a loud cry for assistance, and confused exclamations of the

Earl's English servants, mixed with the Italian, induced him to rush from his own palace into that of his neighbour, where he met Mrs. Montreville in the saloon, pale and disordered, exclaiming against the wretch! the vile murderers! and, on entering an inner apartment, beheld the Earl, wounded, fallen from his chair in the arms of his brother, and, at a small distance, a beautiful female, of wild and disordered appearance, whose bright black eyes seemed starting from her head, and her face o'erspread with the hue of death.

"Oh, Duke!" said the wounded man, "are you come? do you condescend to visit me at this awful moment,—to be my comforter,—to stand between my soul and the blackest perdition? I am wounded, and my weak state forbids me to hope for life; but bear witness of what I declare:—that lady is my wife—I have injured, I have ruined her—but I am her lawful husband—I deserve the death I have received from her hand;—but, Duke, *she* is innocent. I *know* you—promise to protect her—to remove her out of the reach of indignity;—she is virtuous,

trous, and of family—promise, and I shall die in peace.”

The starting eyes of the lady were fixed in deep and hollow attention on the wounded man; as he finished the last sentence, she uttered a shriek, and fell into convulsions.

The surgeons, who now arrived, desired she might be removed; and Mrs. Montreville was prepared to assist the servants in carrying her away.

“Stop!” cried the Earl, with such agitation, that streams of blood flowed not only from his wound, but out of his mouth and nostrils—“touch her not. Oh, Duke Athelane! will you see me expire in torture?—your own Elinor is not more pure.

The Duke of Athelane was one of the few British nobleman who carried the honour and credit of their country with them among foreigners, and who returned with it to their own land untarnished; his word was sacred, and he was consequently cautious of giving it; but the convulsive grasp of the wounded man, the pitiable distortions of the fine countenance before him, and a recollection

of the sad events in his own family, which had given a death-blow to his domestic peace, were irresistible impulses to sympathy; he not only promised to protect the injured wife, but, on the Earl's repeating "Take her away—for God's sake, take her away," he gave orders for her removal to his own palace, whither, as soon as the Earl's wound was dressed, he followed.

Lady Elinor, of whose soft and sympathising disposition it is impossible to say too much, needed no stronger claim on her attention, than the suffering of a fellow-creature. But when the lady revived to a sense of her misfortunes, and a power to recite them, her cause appeared to be that of humanity; and the Duke's anxiety to protect her, became more ardent than even that of the penitent husband.

When Magdalena presented herself at the grate of the convent of the order of mercy, and found, though received with demonstrations of tenderness by the Abbess, that she had been the dupe of a forgery, which could answer no purpose but separating her from
her

her child, no persuasions nor proffered advantages could prevail on her to remain at Lisbon a moment after a vessel was procured to carry her back to England.

Don Joseph Tavora Alvarez, who was yet a bachelor, would have withdrawn his claims on her grandfather's fortune, had she condescended but to conceal a ceremony, which left her a deserted wife; but, besides that she never could stoop to ambiguity—the will that disinherited her was unequivocal; and she imputed all her sufferings to the having violated it.

In the agonies which incertitude of her child's fate inflicted, it was to the care of the Abbess alone that she was indebted for the independence with which she returned to England.

"I shall see you no more, my child," said the tender aunt; "but my fortune at least is my own, and neither that nor my blessing can injure thee."

Having procured from the factory a number of English bank-notes, in exchange for gold, after putting what was necessary into

a purse, the good Abbess made a confidential sister quilt the rest in the corsets of the distracted Magdalena, who, with a fortune thus rendered portable, sailed for Falmouth.

The winds, though favourable, bore no proportion to the impatience of Magdalena: she landed at Falmouth—got into a chaise—reached Holy-Ash—found it in ruins—heard that her son had been taken by Mrs. Littleton and her lover Mr. Hanson, to London—followed them thither—inquired in vain of all Mrs. Littleton's acquaintance—took the resolution of going to Belfast after Hanson—found Mr. Whittal there, but found him dumb in respect to the object of her enquiry.

As *there were*, however, who could and did talk, Magdalena heard her husband had really outlived all his cousins—that he was a British Peer—that he was a bachelor, and so fond of his brother's wife, that it was expected her children would be heirs to his fortune as well as title.

Magdalena's

Magdalena's heart sunk—her head turned round—This then, was the fatal mystery: her child was removed to make way for those of this sister-in-law. Italy! what! was it to follow them to Italy! to the world's end she would follow! she would pierce into the bowels of the earth! yes, and she blessed the provident kindness of the superior of the order of mercy, who had so amply supplied her with the means;—she would hire a vessel, and set off that very day.

But Magdalena's mind happened to be too potent for her strength—she was obliged to wait the crisis of a fever; during which the good woman who was hired to attend her did her part towards relieving her of all worldly cares, by stealing her pockets, her watch, and the few clothes she brought with her from England.

The people of the house, who were not in the secret, redoubled their attention after this accident; and Magdalena, having still her corsets left, and thinking of nothing but her voyage, made so light of the theft after her recovery, that it was with as much surprise:

prise as reluctance they saw a woman who had such extraordinary resources, and valued money so little, leave their house.

The voyage was short. Magdalena had learned, from a banker at Belfast, Lord Gauntlet's exact directions. She reached Florence the day after her arrival at Leghorn; was set down at the portico of the palace which the Earl occupied, and rushed, unannounced, through the saloon into an inner apartment, where her husband and his divine sister-in-law were reposing, without a presentiment of so unwelcome a visitor, after an airing in the beautiful vale of Arno—the Earl's pistols, who adhering to the fashion of dear little Ireland never made any excursion without them, lying on a table beside him.

The Honourable Mrs. Montrevile shrieked, and Lord Gauntlet shook from head to foot, at sight of the injured Magdalena, whose disordered dress, the wildness of her manner, the fire darting from her eyes, and her eager demands to have her child restored to her, petrified the one, and astonished the other; for his Lordship, with all his plans, would

never have hit on one so diabolical as robbing a fond mother of her only child.

Magdalena, with the essence of purity in her soul, and an indignant sense of injury on her brow, scorned to bestow a glance on her libertine husband's companion; it was the agonized feelings of a mother, a fond and doating mother trembling for the fate of her darling, that spoke in every anxious feature, as regardless of the Earl's real, and Mrs. Montreville's well-feigned astonishment, she incessantly demanded her child.

Mr. Montreville entered, and would have interfered.

"Away, away!" cried the almost frantic Magdalena, "dare not to interpose between a distracted mother, and a wretch whose actions outrages nature;—who art thou?"

Mr. Montreville made an attempt at dignity;—he had the honour to be Lord Gauntlet's brother, and that lady's husband.

"Hah!" cried Magdalena, a deadly pale overspreading her face, "art thou the brother? and is that woman thy wife? Ah, my child! my Horace! my sweet boy! sole treasure of my existence!—Oh thou accursed father! what

what hast thou done? Speak, save me from madness! thou can'st not!—and is my child murdered? was he in the way of this sister and this brother? and must I never see my beautiful boy? never hear his sweet voice!—Oh Montreville, have pity on me! restore my child! I will forgive and pray for thee!”

“You rave, Magdalena—I cannot restore.”

“Oh!” shrieked Magdalena, seizing one of the pistols, “cannot!”

“It is loaded!” cried Mrs. Montreville flying out of the room.

Mr. Montreville caught the desperate hand which held the fatal weapon bent on self-destruction;—in the struggle the pistol turned, and went off; the Earl groaned and fell from his chair; Magdalena, stiff with horror, dropped at his feet—and thus ended her melancholy narrative.

The next morning the Earl was considered as drawing near his dissolution, and Magdalena passed it at the feet of her crucifix. Not so the fair Mrs. Montreville; she flew to the Palazza Pitti, where she displayed her grief, her eloquence, and her beauty, with such effect,

fect, that a person high in the confidence of the Grand Duke, related the aggravated story to the Sovereign, and procured an order for the imprisonment of Magdalena, which, but from the timely notice of Lord Vallerton, would have been executed.

Though the high souled Magdalena trembled at the guilty desperation, that would have rushed, unbidden, before the creator, she feared not to die;—but to be condemned as a criminal, on the evidence of people interested in her destruction; to dishonour her noble family; and stamp disgrace on the name of the brave admiral her father, by an ignominious death;—to leave her son, if yet he lived, an unpitied orphan, was terrible—yet such was the clamour raised against her, and such her predicament as a foreigner whom the English minister could not protect, every thing was to be dreaded, if the Earl, as was hourly expected, should die.

The Duke and Lady Elinor were incapable of any efforts, so affected were they with her danger;—Lord Vallerton, however, was too solicitous to obtain the approbation of
the

the fair Elinor, and too much interested for the innocent stranger, to remain inactive.

A yacht always awaited his Lordship's commands at Leghorn; there was not a moment to lose; he put her into his English chaise, and attended by his own servants, had proceeded near two miles before the officers of justice demanded her at the Duke of Athelane's residence.

Lord Vallerton recommended Magdalena to the captain in the strongest terms; she was attended by a Scots woman from the *suite* of the Duke, and he had the pleasure to see the yacht out of reach of pursuit, before he returned with the welcome tidings to Lady Elinor, whose smile

“Through a sea of liquid pearl”
was his rich reward.

As the Duke had no suspicion the order for Magdalena's imprisonment could proceed from those to whom her innocence was so well known, he hastened to inform the penitent, and as he thought him, dying Earl, both of her danger and escape; the joyful emotion the news inspired, was unaffected; it broke an abscess on his liver, which, contrary

trary to hope, he had strength to throw up, and from that hour he gradually recovered; the wound, which independent of other symptoms, was not dangerous, healed, and the good Duke began to rejoice in the hope of seeing him again re-united to his amiable wife.

But Thyrsis the sick, and Thyrsis the well, were never more distinct personages; the traits of remorse, and professions of reformation, which justice wrung from the Earl when he thought himself "at the awful moment, when all men speak truth," vanished before the fascinating and tender glances of Mrs. Montreville's bewitching eyes, like a beautiful frost-work, raised under the keen blast of winter, which dissolves and disappears before the morning sun-beam; not even the news, which overwhelmed the Duke and his daughter with affliction, that the yacht, which had orders to land Magdalena at Leith, had been wrecked on the Scotch coast, and every soul perished, had power to weaken the charm which infatuated him during the remainder of his short life.

The

The Duke was disgusted, and, spite of the fyren, the Earl ashamed. Mrs. Montreville soon after discovered the climate of Naples would be more congenial to his state of health than that of Florence. He accordingly removed thither *to die*; and his corps was brought to Ireland, and buried with great funeral pomp.

Lady Gauntlet, triumphing in the success of her schemes, became Countess of Gauntlet; and though, after some time when she met Lady Elinor Athelane first as Lady Vallerton, afterwards as Countess of Denningcourt, she had felt, in the marked and scornful disgust with which the indispensable civilities were received and paid by that lady, both at court and in private houses, that she perfectly remembered every occurrence at Florence; yet as recollections, unsupported by proofs, and not called for by a claimant, could neither un-countess nor rob her of the adoration her beauty excited, she contented herself with professing to admire the woman whom, though it was impossible she could like, she had the less reason to fear, as Lord Denningcourt

Denningcourt was too polite to recur to an event so disagreeable both to her lord and herself.

But when the son of that unhappy mother, whose memory Lady Denningcourt cherished with equal affection and respect, appeared to claim his rights, under the sanction of his venerable grandfather, then it was that the Countess of Gauntlet began to fear the exactitude of her recollections; and though the Duke, to whom the late Earl had avowed his marriage, was no more, the assertions of his daughter, whether competent or not in a court of law, would receive such full credit in the world, as must injure her in the opinion of those respectable persons on whom she had hitherto so artfully practised, as to be herself, and to make others, what she pleased.

This was a reflection, to which the detected treachery of Sir Solomon Mushroom, and the teazings of her cousin Whittal, were but subordinate vexations; and she had already half suggested a scheme to escape part of the ignominy due to her nefarious practice. If she and the good Earl, her husband, could by any means

means escape the storm themselves, they had no objection to see it burst in thunder on their colleague; and were actually meditating on the means, when, behold, from the world of waters, another and most damning witness raised to compleat their overthrow and confusion.

The solicitor employed by the Earl sent them the astonishing and unexpected intelligence, that the daughter of Admiral Herbert, the mother of their young adversary, was living, and actually at the seat of the former, whither she had been conducted by Mr Adderly; and scarce had they perused this unwelcome note, before a second arrived, with the as little expected account, that the clergyman who married the late Earl, was also found near the same place.

There was no longer time for deliberation—the Countess immediately began to act.

Convinced that all would be discovered in a process at law, she resolved not to abide the event of a trial.

Her

Her cousin Whittal was the only person who could, even on hear-say evidence, prove the Earl or herself privy to carrying off the young lord; and though that young man was in the prettiest train of pleasure imaginable, he had sense enough to know, that a secret in possession of half a score lawyers was not worth a thirteener; he therefore faithfully promised to take the very first opportunity of possessing himself of his appointment, for the very striking reason, that if that were lost, he could not get another.

Having secured this point, her ladyship, in the greatest distress, revealed what she chose should be a statement of her situation to all her powerful friends, protesting her own innocence, lamenting the fraud which the Earl had unknowingly been guilty of, and declaring their mutual resolution to resign the title and estate, the hour the claimant's legitimacy was proved, though it would reduce her to the most extreme distress.

Distress! Lady Gauntlet! the beautiful, divine Lady Gauntlet distressed! abominable! shocking! it was an affair of more
than

than national consequence, and must be prevented.

These warm friends of Lady Gauntlet were not very famous for penetration, nor much respected for the morality of their characters; but they had what was preferable to either, great interest; they struck every body, who chose to hear them, dumb with admiration, of the honour, the generosity, the justice, and humility of the beautiful Countess. Such able advocates, indeed, did they prove themselves, that a pension on the establishment of her own country for life, an additional appointment of honour and profit for the Earl, with a continuation of all his court employments, and, finally, but that not immediately, the rank of peeress in her own right was actually promised.

Sir Solomon Mushroom having in the mean while received a most haughty rejection of his niece, his money, and his *proofs*; he visited the Earl, with his gall inflated with revenge; and as Lord Denningcourt too had suddenly flown entirely off, the Countess.

ness considered that her friends could command every thing but money; that this was what she could not possibly do without, and that she knew of no other possible means of procuring it, so she agreed that her lord should renew the old idea of uniting the families.

Sir Solomon made certain that he held the fate of the Earl of Gauntlet in his own bosom; and as he resolved to be true himself, agreed his niece and eighty thousand pounds should be Lord Delworth's; and the Countess, on her part, who having once laid a load of guilt on his shoulders to her friends, could not, and remembering his offences, would not retract, meditated many ways of mortifying him, besides that of informing him, the day after his niece's marriage, that he had not bought a coronet for her, nor secured his own character.

How could Lady Gauntlet, or any other lady with so many affairs on her head, and successful in all, exist without a confidant of some sort? and who so properly qualified
for

for the honourable office as Mrs. Woudbe a lady, whose delicacy and moral rectitude was put on and off with infinitely less trouble than her *rouge*—not that the Countess was so unmindful of the respect due to herself, as to own her guilt to one as guilty—no, it was the triumph and revenge that could not be well enjoyed, without being also a little talked of; it was, indeed, principally to gratify the latter passion that she took Rosa to Delworth, with so many advantages of person and ornament; nay, to mortify the Mushrooms, she would not have been displeased to see the coronet she could no longer wear herself, deck the brows of the Beggar.

When however, Mrs. Woudbe, after complimenting her on the policy of her arrangement in the usual lady-like way, exchanged secret for secret, what must have been her beautiful ladyship's astonishment to find in her confidant the person destined to succeed her in her title and home.

Mrs. Woudbe being in the stage-box at the play without her husband, (no uncommon

mon thing) was so disturbed by a quarrel between some young bloods behind, that it obliged her, in common decency, to faint; and being taken great care of by a handsome young man, her heart, for the at least fiftieth time, rebelled against her liege lord, in his favour.

As this Adonis wore a cockade, he was, of course, a captain—as long as he pleased—and the event proved him more moderate than many of his sort; for he laid down his captainship before it laid down him, and announced himself Horace Montreville, only son of the late Earl of Gauntlet, plaintiff in a suit in chancery now pending between him and the present Earl; and indeed, made his title out so clear, and was in possession of so many family anecdotes, that no doubt could be entertained of his identity and success.

Every body who has the felicity to appeal to the wise laws of this realm, and the honest men who make it the business of their lives to understand them, will know, that though magna charta may do much, money will do

much more—even counsellor Fire-brand will not open his mouth for or against, or, as it often happens, both for *and* against, without a fee; and no justice or injustice can be had in the courts of law without money; no wonder therefore, that, in a cause of such magnitude, the wronged heir of a British Peer should stand in particular need of assistance from his friends.

Mrs. Woudbe greatly assisted him both in money and jewels; but though, considering the compact between them which secured to her a share of all advantages, this was no more than fair, she did not impart it to her friend the Countess. As to the mode by which her elevation was to be accomplished, though it may be inconvenient to little folks, nothing can be more common, fashionable, or regular in succession, among the haut ton, than an intrigue, a discovery, a divorce, and a marriage; which brings the parties into a situation to begin again, and so on, *ad libitum*.

Lady

Lady Gauntlet, who valued herself on fine acting, had acted sensibility so well with Rosa, and was so well pleased with the grateful attachment to her person and interest, which that acting excited, that nothing less than what now happened could have so compleatly changed her sentiments and conduct.

Having indulged her passion for Lord Denningcourt, which she had also acted into reality, at a time and place when no other passion was in its way, which had never before been the case; and finding it returned with the most provoking coldness and neglect, her ladyship found herself in a disposition to act, to the life, all the extravagance of a disappointed woman, before the same good creature, who lost her character by waiting on poor Kattie Buhannun, after having lived four years a very useful servant to the Countess, added jealousy to her other mortifications, by acquainting her, as before mentioned, that Miss Walsingham passed the night at the castle. This information was followed by two natural conclusions:—Lord

Denningcourt could not be less charming in other eyes than hers; and he could not have been cold to her, without an attachment to some other object;—and a conclusion, more natural than either, was, that the Countess of Gauntlet most cordially detested her rival.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

*Women of Fashion nonplussed—the Beggar first
talks out of all Reason, and then is run away
with—a common Cause and Effect
among modern Misses.*

ROSA obeyed the haughty mandate delivered by Mrs. Modely, and followed her to the best drawing-room, which, in honour of the company, was already lighted up.

How changed were the politics of the lady of the mansion, since she felt a most dear pleasure in anticipating the mortification Sir Solomon Mushroom and his fair nieces would feel on meeting Rosa under her roof,

with every advantage of person and dress, and every appearance of happiness.

But the difference was—she then considered her as rivalling *them*; she now felt her rivalling *herself*.

The whole family of the Gauntlets, the Earl excepted, Sir Solomon Mushroom, his niece, Mrs. Feversham, Lady Louisa, and Mr. Brudenel, were, in appearance, assembled to witness the humiliation of Rosa.

Sir Solomon sat in great state on the right of the Countess; Mrs. Feversham on the left; Miss Mushroom, elegantly attired, was arranging some beautiful flowers for a *bouquet*, with her lover agreeably trifling by her side; the Major and Lady Louisa on an opposite sofa; the three young ladies, Madame Rosette, and Mr. Brudenel, with a *porte-feuille*, before them, though not looked at after Rosa's entrance, who, not expecting such an assembly of elegance, and dazzled by the lights, felt confused, and drew back.

The fatigue she had undergone, her hair blown out of all order by the evening breeze, in her walk through Denningcourt park, her
rusty

rusty black habit, and faint look, formed a contrast sufficiently gratifying to those who envied or who hated her.

Lady Gauntlet glanced her eye over her whole figure with expression of rancour it was impossible for Rosa to understand.

“My God!” cried Mrs. Feversham, “can this be Miss Walsingham?—I protest it is, and in her old rusty black habit. Why, Lord! I vow I thought Lord Denningcourt had you in keeping at the frightful old castle yonder. I am glad you was not such a fool;—but pray, have you worn that shabby habit ever since?”

Again Lady Gauntlet’s eye shot beams of indignation at Rosa as she slowly advanced.

“Stop where you are, Miss,” said she, with the air of a Russian Empress. “Dear Sir Solomon, how shall I apologise to you, or my sweet Charlotte, for having (notwithstanding I might have known, that had this girl been worthy my protection, yours would not have been withheld) been so prepossessed in her favour by that artful wretch, Lord Denningcourt.”

"Artful!" cried Mrs. Feversham, happening to cast her eyes on the pretty bracelets he had himself first put on her arm—"well, I declare, I never heard he had that character;—but, to be sure, he is vastly handsome—has the finest person, and whitest teeth, of any man of fashion I ever saw."

Lord Delworth and the Major bowed.

"Present company, you know, gentlemen."

"You are vastly polite, m'am;" and Miss Mushroom's seat grew uneasy.

"Polite! I hope I am not unpolite, Miss; I think I ought to know how to behave in *any* company."

Sir Solomon, to whom these spars, though familiar, were not very agreeable, begged Lady Gauntlet would proceed.

"Lord Denningcourt's fine person and white teeth," resumed her ladyship, "seems to have made a stronger impression on Mrs. Feversham than I confess they ever did on me."

Mrs. Feversham might be piqued into a talking fit, but never into a silent one;—she
was

was sorry for that—it was not her fault, nor Lord Denningcourt's.

It might possibly be hers, her ladyship coldly said; but to leave his lordship's perfections, she confessed herself to have forgotten the respect due to her own character, as well as her friend Sir Solomon Mushroom, when she took a low artful person under her protection, and recommended her to one of the best women in the world as her companion.

Rosa recovered from her confusion in an instant.

“Mrs. Woudbe—you know Mr. Woudbe, Sir Solomon, of Portman-square, a man of immense fortune.”

“We were at a masked ball there with the Countess, uncle.”

“I remember it perfectly; Mr. Woudbe is a member of our house, I believe; I think I have heard him speak very well—vastly well.”

That Sir Solomon could not remember, for it had not happened—Mr. Woudbe not being a senator; but the mistake added to

the respectability of the Woudbe's; it was therefore suffered to pass; and her ladyship proceeded."

"My poor friend! we are deprived of the pleasure of her company by an indisposition, brought on by this girl's abandoned conduct.

Rosa's person rose with her mind; she looked down on the beautiful Countess.

"Mrs. Woudbe—Woudbe—sure I have heard enough of her to doubt her being so much affected at another person's conduct, who was never ashamed of her own; sure your ladyship is quizzing all this while."

"Mrs. Feversham, I am shocked at you."

"I am sorry for that, my dear; because you are then precisely in Mrs. Woudbe's situation; feeling that concern for your friend, you have more need of for yourself."

"Lord, m'am, there is no talking to you."

"Then don't attempt it, my dear. But pray, my lady, what has this poor girl done, that has so affected Mrs. Woudbe?"

Mrs.

Mrs. Feverham would talk right or wrong; and when once she fancied herself attacked, as she called it, dealt her wit about with so little delicacy or respect to persons, that Lady Gauntlet was, strange to tell, a little embarrassed.

"I am really ashamed to say what she has done;—but what would you say, Mrs. Feverham, if, in a family like mine, a young person should absent herself, and pass the night under the roof of such a man as Lord Denningcourt?"

"Say! I declare I hardly know what I should say, more than what I before said on the same subject, that it would be very foolish."

"Would it not affect *you*?"

"Not much; for Miss Walsingham—"

"Walsingham! Lord, m'am, you really are too bad; I dare say you know her name well enough."

"If she does," said Sir Solomon, "it is more than I do."

"Sir Solomon!" Lady Gauntlet was surprised.

"Uncle means her real name; for tho' Colonel Buhanun gave her leave to assume his, nobody but our village doctor knew that of her mother."

"Buhanun!" exclaimed Mrs. Feversham; "why sure this can't be! and yet—let me look at you, child;—yes, now I recollect it is—it must—there is not such another face in the world;—how could I forget it!—it is the little Beggar. Lord, I never shall forget, how like an angel I thought she looked when I saw her at Mount Pleasant;—but how come you to change your name? that has a bad—a very bad look."

"A trifle," Lady Gauntlet said, "in comparison of other matters; but to expose the atrocity of her conduct, was only a proper penance for her own credulity, and an atonement for the little respect the countenancing her at all implied to the opinion of her good friend, Sir Solomon Mushroom."

That was the only part of the business at which Sir Solomon Mushroom was at all surprised; for as to the poor girl, what could be expected from her? she was taken from
the

the lowest state of beggary, made a fine lady, and then deserted;—the vices of her parents were natural and of consequence, permanent; the airs of gentility acquired, and, of course, superficial;—he was sorry for her, but could not persuade persons of her ladyship's rank, and of Mrs. Woudbe's respectability, to countenance an unhappy creature of her description;—but perhaps, gentlemen, you will not object to a small collection for the poor girl—my one pound one is ready.”

“By no means,” cried the Major, jumping on his feet; and after tossing his guinea into his hat, handed it to Lord Delworth, who generously followed his example; and having also collected Sir Solomon's *one pound one*, he offered the magnificent aggregate to Rosa, who, without a trait of passion on her countenance, calmly advised him to keep the money himself, as the foundation of a fund, to answer the future exigencies of his own family.

Lady

Lady Gauntlet, secure in her own prospects, answered this sarcasm with "Poor thing!"

"Have you any further commands for me, Lady Gauntlet?" said Rosa, without deigning to notice her pity.

"Are you pressed for time, Miss?—one visit a day is surely enough at that delightful castle;—consider, one may be surfeited with sweets."

"It may be for your ladyship's interest to consider that; but if you have no further commands——"

Rosa had, with great innocence, made this stinging retort—Lady Gauntlet coloured.

Miss Mushroom was astonished at her assurance.

Madame Rosette, with the young ladies, withdrew; and the Rev. Mr. Brudenel was on his legs to turn the bold creature out of the room; but as Rosa was haughtily saving him any trouble, Lady Gauntlet called to her to stop, and bid him shut the door.

"I have yet so much compassion, so much, that I—I would prevent your utter ruin;—I
have

have ordered my chaise to convey you the first stage towards London, and a servant to go with you still further—Your things are ready, I hear.”

“A very handsome offer,” cried Mrs. Feverham.

Her ladyship was too good, Miss Mushroom was sure.

Lady Gauntlet considered every body, the Rev. Mr. Brudenel said.

Sir Solomon wished she might not repent it; for his part, he knew enough of the disposition of such sort of wretches to expect insult for benefit.

Rosa was at first struck with the offer; and had not Lady Gauntlet's manner of speaking of her *poor friend*, and the occasion of her illness, steeled her heart, she might perhaps have allowed her part of the credit she gave herself; since, as the matter stood, her absence and stay at Denningcourt certainly wanted elucidation; and it was not an absurd conclusion, as she had perhaps been seen going towards Denningcourt park, that she had again visited the castle. But there was
also

also another objection to her immediate removal from the neighbourhood; her heart was strongly bent on attending Elinor—the Duke's last words impelled her to hope she would be admitted into the family at the jointure-house—he had promised she should hear from them; and, in the present disposition of her mind, she would as soon have doubted holy writ as his word;—nothing therefore could prevail on her to leave the neighbourhood till her fiat was pronounced from them.

“Are you dumb, Miss?” cried the Countess, rising with an excess of passion she could neither restrain nor conceal, though evidently wishing to do both.

“No, madam,” replied Rosa; “I am willing to think you mean me a favour; but——”

“But what! Your hankering is after your seducer—you will not accept my offer.”

“Not to-night, madam.”

“Not till you have apprised Lord Denningcourt;—but you shall neither see nor send to him; I will confine you—you shall live

on bread and water, nor shall a creature in the house dare to speak to you."

"Confine me! this is really such an outrageous defence of my honour, Lady Gauntlet, as, considering every thing, would alarm me, if I did not know you: I am not to learn, madam, that to confine me is more than you dare do."

If Sir Solomon was in Lady Gauntlet's situation, he would dare do any thing he pleased.

"You have given me a noble proof of your daring already, Sir Solomon."

"How so, woman—what dost mean?"

"That you have done what no gentleman will *dare* to do—falsified your own word."

"'Tis false; my word is as good as the bank."

"Is it, Sir? I thought you promised to protect me; and there are those who know you might have kept that promise without injury to yourself."

"Lord, if ever I heard any thing to equal this!" said Miss Mushroom to her lover, in
a tone

a tone of alarm—"I declare she is going to be impertinent to my uncle now."

"Let her take care," roared Sir Solomon, in a voice that had often made Rosa tremble.

"Well, the girl is really clever and spirited," said Mrs. Feversham; "and the more I look at her, the more I think she resembles what I was a few years back; but come, child, Lady Gauntlet knows the world better than you, or even me; remember the old chandler-woman, the watchmen, my earrings, and the caricature of a justice; there are such bodies all over the world; and you may chance to meet them where there are no Lord Denningcourt's; take my advice, accept the offer her ladyship makes."

Rosa thanked her; but added, as she was a stranger to every part of her situation, excepting the beggary of her origin, and the accident she alluded to, it was impossible for her to judge on the fit or unfit. "I am ready," she added, "to quit Delworth."

"And return to Denningcourt, abandoned wretch!"

"Dear

"Dear madam," said Louisa, "what is it to us where she goes? we can only pity and advise her; if she be insensible and ungrateful, she will suffer; but why should our present happiness be sacrificed to her folly."

Lord Delworth seconded his sister; and Miss Mushroom, with some difficulty, squeezed out a tear.

Lady Gauntlet's fine features reassumed the aspect of placid goodness: she embraced her future daughter-in-law, asked the pardon of the company, and even apologised to her children; but insisted nevertheless, that Rosa should not be suffered to stir, at least till Mrs. Woudbe discharged her.

"Mrs. Woudbe!" repeated Rosa; "she declined to see me, and can have no business."

"No business! were you not entrusted with her jewels?"

"Jewels! does she charge *me* with any breach of that trust?"

Lady Gauntlet had gone further than she intended. "It is, however, proper she should discharge you."

"Nothing

"Nothing more so," Sir Solomon said ;
"and if she made any more words about the
matter, he was of the quorum, and he, or
indeed my Lord, if he acted, might commit
her."

"Commit me, Sir !"

"Yes, madam, to prison—the county
gaol—wherever that is."

"*Can* you, Sir? then God help me; for
I am sure you *will*."

Rosa had hitherto borne up with spirit;
but though she had never been more sensible
of the support of conscious innocence, the
last fit frightened her:—the idea of standing
quite alone in the world, at the mercy of Sir
Solomon Mushroom, Mrs. Woudbe, and
their sort, and at last, perhaps, be sent to
prison, was too much: she endeavoured in
vain to conceal her emotion, as she slowly
retreated from the presence she was begin-
ning to fear, when a servant entered, breath-
less with haste and surprise, to announce the
Duke of Athelane.

The Countess, guilt struck, leaned back
in her chair—forgetting, in that moment, the
Duke

Duke of Athelane she feared, had no longer the power to confront her.

Lady Louisa, who was perfectly well-bred, advanced with Lord Delworth to the Duke.

Mrs. Feversham was all eyes, Sir Solomon all bows, and Miss Mushroom resumed her flowers.

Rosa was near the door, gazing with anxious hope at the Duke, whose figure, as he passed her, looked more than mortal; but when the first compliments were over, Sir Solomon and his party, Mr. Brudenel and Lady Louisa introduced, and every body seated, finding herself still standing unnoticed, or even seeming to be seen, she retreated nearer the door—her heart flowing from her eyes.

With Lady Gauntlet's recollection, her easy eloquence returned; she complimented the Duke, inquired after the ladies of the family, and was all again the graceful, infatuating Countess of Gauntlet.

In this moment, to the surprise of more than one of the party, Mrs. Woudbe entered, in an elegant dishabille: she had really
fretted

fretted herself ill; but having no particular disease, she could not lie on bed all day and all night, and her own company was terrible; but as no body chose to share the insupportable burthen with her, and as she heard the Duke of Athelane was in the drawing-room, she resolved to join the company, secretly exclaiming, "Oh! if I had my dear jewels again, I would think no more of the traitor."

The invalid brushed by Rosa with tolerable face, considering her weak state; and Sir Solomon immediately resigned his chair to the wife of the man of immense fortune.

The Duke, after a pause, confessed himself at a loss to apologize for intruding on Lady Gauntlet a visit so out of all order.

The Duke of Athelane, Lady Gauntlet said, could never be an intruder.

Again the Duke paused.

"You have heard, Lady Gauntlet, I presume, how much we are all affected by the indisposition of a young relation."

"Certainly, my Lord Duke," said Mrs. Feversham, full of self-collection, and proud of the ease with which she could speak to a nobleman

nobleman of the first rank, even when not spoken to, "every body has heard of poor Lady Denningcourt's misfortune; and as every body knows she is one of the very best women in the world, why every body pities her monstrously. I suppose you have had Doctor Willis?"

"Now," joined Mrs. Woudbe, "I think I should prefer Monro; you know he attends Bedlam, and therefore—"

The Duke was thunderstruck: he wished to have kept the unhappy malady a profound secret; and having commanded the domestics to be dumb on the matter, concluded they were so—as to the heads of the family, they were not to be doubted;—but here were incontestible proofs, that it had furnished chit chat for half the idlers of the age, and would certainly, even if Elinor was cured, be either an impediment to his grand plan, or a disgrace to it; he could not immediately recover this painful conviction, and therefore did not answer.

Lady Gauntlet, who was the essence of fine breeding, was as much shocked at the
vulgar

vulgar forwardness of both ladies as the Duke himself, but could not, without adopting their manners, apologise for them.

After a short silence, the Duke addressed Mrs. Woudbe:—you have a young lady under your protection, madam, who is the motive of my intrusion on Lady Gauntlet.”

“Walsingham,” Mrs. Woudbe presumed, vainly endeavouring to conceal her confusion under an air of haughty contempt.

“My dear Woudbe,” cried Lady Gauntlet, in a tone of consolation, “do not let it affect you—think of her as she deserves; you have been too good—she worthless and ungrateful—there is nothing so extraordinary in either case.”

Extraordinary! no, Sir Solomon thought, with humble submission to his Grace, nothing was more common; for his part, he scarce ever remembered doing a charitable act, without having dirt thrown in his teeth for it, which was the reason why he had left off charity.

The Duke looked both disgusted and surprised. “I shall be extremely disappointed,”

said

said he, "if I am to understand, by all this, that the young lady's conduct has wounded the sensibility of her patroness, and provoked so dirty a philippic against one of the cardinal virtues from that gentleman."

Nobody better understood the dangerous weapon of irony than Lady Gauntlet; and though extremely vulnerable to its wound, and nicely sensible to its attack, the constant guard on her feelings never betrayed her secret vexation. The cause of her friend was now her own; and without affecting to have heard what had passed, she directed the brilliant, yet melting languor of her fine eyes, to the Duke.

"Mrs. Woudbe, my Lord, was so attached to this unworthy——"

"She really is unworthy, then?"

"As she has been an inmate of my house, under the roof with my daughters, and often my companion, though never theirs, I am ashamed to say how much so."

Miss Mushroom's hint now sent Lord Delworth across the room to inform Rosa she might retire—he supposed the Countess

would send for her when she was wanted ; but though he waited a moment, she neither answered nor took his hint.

The Duke's looks betrayed his chagrin ; Mrs. Woudbe understood her cue was to affect sensibility, and took out her handkerchief ; Lady Gauntlet darted an indignant glance at the stubborn Rosa, who kept her station, undismayed.

" I am," said the Duke, " in a very delicate predicament. The young person was, we find, a juvenile friend of our young relation : she passed Lady Denningcourt's house, we think, by accident ; Miss Athelane saw and recollected her ;—we expected, after a composing medicine, which the gentleman who attends her thought necessary, she would have forgotten the incident ; but we find, what we consider as a very favourable omen, her recollection quite clear : she calls incessantly for her friend ; and really I was so much prepossessed——"

" You have seen her, Duke ?"

" The incident was so sudden and unexpected, it affected them both so much, there
was

was no avoiding that; but though I must confess her manner and person struck me so much——”

Mrs. Feverham did not wonder at that; it struck every body.

“There are certain delicacies in our situation,” resumed the Duke, “which render an inquiry into her character and connections necessary, before we can resolve to indulge our dear invalid.”

His good Grace was perfectly right, Sir Solomon said;—caution in such case was the proof of wisdom. The ladies, he added, were tender; but for his part, he thought it incumbent on every man of *character* to be frank, and therefore he must take the liberty to be their orator on this occasion. The girl’s character was notorious, and her connection such, as it would not surprise him to hear had lightened the sideboard.

The Duke was astonished. “But how,” said he, “could such a person get introduced to Lady Gauntlet?”

Her ladyship arose: she had some fine exotics in an adjoining apartment, which she wished to shew his Grace.

The Duke also arose, and was leading her towards the door, when Rosa rushed forward—the colour of her complexion varying with every breath.

The Countess would have passed, but the Duke made an involuntary stop.

“Lord, if ever I saw any thing so bold and impertinent in my life!” cried Miss Charlotte.

Lady Louisa conceiving her mother insulted, whispered Mr. Brudenel, who immediately insisted on Rosa’s quitting the presence of the Countess; but had he spoken in thunder, she would neither have heard nor regarded it.

“I adjure you, Sir,” said she, addressing the Duke, “by the honour which, I am sure, is in you more than lip-deep, to hear all that can be said of me in my own presence, and let me answer for myself.”

“Well, I love her spirit,” cried Mrs. Feversham; “it is so like my own.”

“ ’Tis

"'Tis an evil spirit, and ought to be laid," cried the Major.

"Will your Grace do me the honour to see my exotics;" and the Countess extended the white hand he had relinquished.

“ Stop, Sir,” said Rosa ; “ I once more adjure you, as one of the inestimable props on which the fine harmony of social justice depends: I do not now wish to avail myself of the favourable sentiments you professed for me when we parted; I no longer implore you to gain me admission under Lady Denningcourt’s roof: I am the offspring of a beggar—an outcast ;—let the obloquy of my origin glare on every event of my existence; let me meet the contempt of little minds, and endure the hardships of that poverty which is my birth-right; but no longer let me be loaded with guilt, from which my soul is free; attach not crimes to the name of beggar, which those of a superior rank only dare commit with impunity. Too long have my feelings been lacerated by the injustice of those who despise the beggary they want soul to relieve; too long has patient

E 3

endurance,

endurance, and the hope that travels with us through life, sanctioned the calumny which pursues me. I have heard myself accused on prejudice, and condemned on surmise; but I appeal from vulgar error, from misrepresentations and persecution, to a nobleman, in whom I will believe, that honour and nobility are synonymous—not for favour, but justice. If I be proved only unfortunate, I cannot fear admission to the jointure-house, for Lady Denningcourt's is the asylum of the miserable; if guilty, I am unworthy of breathing the same atmosphere with her,—by my own actions, such as they have been, I am ready to stand or fall."

"We shall see," cried Mrs. Feverham.

The Duke's eyes were rivetted on the animated speaker. "I wish," said he, "you may be wronged, though I must hope this company incapable of false accusation."

"Will your Grace see the exotics?"

The Duke hesitated. "What have *you* to say?" turning from Lady Denningcourt to Rosa.

"What

“What I have before said, Sir,—that I desire, I demand, to hear the answers to those inquiries, it certainly becomes you to make, into my character and connections. One virtuous lady is too much affected to speak out; another, after charging me with indelicate and criminal irregularities in the presence of her own amiable daughters, requires to be alone with a *gentleman*, while she relates my enormities; and Sir Solomon Mushroom asserts, to my face, that my character is notorious. Well, my Lord, you see every body is silent; have I your leave to be my own accuser?”

“There is a witchcraft about you I cannot resist; but (and the Duke led her towards his own chair) I must not suffer a lady to stand, while one gentleman keeps his seat.” Yet, with all his politeness, there stood the divine the beautiful Countess, who, deserted by a man of quality, found herself in a situation perfectly new.

The Duke recollected himself; he reconducted Lady Gauntlet to her seat.

"Then you will not see my exotics, Duke?"

"I confess myself spell-bound;—this is an extraordinary girl; is it not possible your ladyship may be mistaken in her? she must be very good, or very bad;—with such a mind and person there can be no medium."

"Lady Gauntlet is mistaken, my Lord; but admitting she was not, if I were the unhappy creature she suspects, should not that rather entitle me to compassion?"

"Not when you avow your guilt, and glory in it."

"I have done neither."

"No! not acknowledged being at Denningcourt castle all night, when my servants were dispatched every where in search of you."

"How!" said the Duke—"can this be true?"

Rosa answered, "it is, my Lord," with what Miss Mushroom declared was the most unheard-of effrontery.

"At

“At the castle! with Denningcourt! then indeed I fear you cannot be wronged. But has he not a woman there?”

This was too fair an opportunity for Mrs. Feverham to let pass; she could take on her to say, that, to her certain knowledge, and she was seldom deceived, Lord Denningcourt had fallen desperately in love with Miss Walsingham the very first time he had seen her.

“In love!” repeated Lady Gauntlet, scornfully.

“True as fate, my Lady;—and really, when I heard he had deserted my dear friend Miss Mushroom——”

“Deserted!” repeated Miss Mushroom, colouring with vexation.

“Bless me,” continued Mrs. Feverham, “sure there is an echo here. You know, my dear, he did desert you; but you could not help that, nor he neither, perhaps. I really thought when I heard it, and that he had got a mistress with him at his old castle, it was Miss Walsingham; which, as she is

so beautiful, you know, my Lord, was the most natural thing in the world."

"You give me up, Sir, I see," said Rosa; "but I warn you against hasty conclusions. In respect to this castle, and this Lord, I shall come purified out of the fire."

As Lady Gauntlet had her own unanswerable reasons for believing that impossible, she had great pleasure in observing a degree of settled incredulity in the Duke's looks.

"But," continued Rosa, "as, when I shewed your ladyship the letter, which proved how I was imposed on, and for what infamous purpose—"

To her utter astonishment, Lady Gauntlet protested the girl was mad—actually mad; she had never shewn her any paper or letter to that or any other purport.

Rosa's hands and eyes were uplifted.

"None of your grimaces," roared Sir Solomon; "I shall be obliged to commit you at last."

"Let us take care not to commit ourselves, Sir," said the Duke, gravely; "we must not intimidate even a guilty pannel on trial."

"Mrs. Woudbe, I do not expect you will accuse yourself; but sure you won't deny certain letters?"

Mrs. Woudbe did deny the whole story, and defied Rosa to produce a single voucher.

Rosa's colour and her countenance fell; the vouchers were indeed out of her power, as she had returned them all.

The Duke's fine open brow was fast curling into austere severity. "This," said he, "is trifling and absurd; and what could it benefit you to prove your protectress an ill woman? her vices would not excuse yours."

"No, to be sure," joined Mrs. Feversham; "the same sense that enabled you to discover the faults of others should certainly assist you to correct your own."

The Duke gave Mrs. Feversham a glance of approbation, of which she was so proud, she repeated the same sentences twice over without stopping.

"The end I expected it to answer, Sir, was not to expose the lady you call my protectress, but to prove, that instead of being discarded as a person who disgraced her em-

employers, I was only solicitous not to be disgraced by them; though, as the ladies are witnesses for each other, and I have certainly resigned all the—No”—and a glow of deep crimson covered her face—“no, I have not resigned *all* the vouchers—here is one;” and she produced the letter she had received from the house-maid. “This, I presume, does not belong to *you*, Madam—it is addressed to *me*.”

Mrs. Woudbe forgot her invalid state, and rushed to seize the latter;—“Yes,” said she, almost stifled with her joyful emotion, “it is; it is mine—give it me.”

“Is it not addressed to me?” answered Rosa coldly, putting it into the Duke’s hand.

“Dear Miss Wallingham, but you know it is for me; it is, it is—Oh give it to me.”

Lady Gauntlet was confounded for her friend—she would have whispered a different conduct—but besides the Duke’s, every other eye was fixed on them. An exposure of Mrs. Woudbe was now inevitable; but, as the Duke justly observed, as that would not exonerate Rosa from the first charge; and

as,

as, in her opinion, nothing else could; she had nothing for it but to be surprized at Mrs. Woudbe, and let her sink or swim; as her good or evil genius preponderated.

“Many of these letters, I believe madam,” resumed Rosa, “You will not now deny came through my hands, from a distressed man—your *natural brother*.”

“No matter, the letter is *mine*—give it to me.”

“Stay, madam, I think it will be of consequence to me, that some person should peruse this letter on my behalf.—Will you, my Lord, have so much charity?”

“First let me know what end the reading is to answer.”

“None in the world, dear Duke,” cried, Mrs. Woudbe, “but to ruin me,—Would you, Miss Walsingham, wish that? What good would it do you to ruin me?”

“I might have asked you the same question, madam, a few moments since.”

“I cannot understand this business, ladies,” said the Duke gravely; “here seems to be a secret not too honourable, either in the concealment,

dealment or discovery. I must beg leave to return the letter; I am by no means expert in the developement of intrigues, and cannot take so curved a mean to discover what it cannot import me to know."

"Have a moment's patience, Sir," said Rosa, rather hastily, "if you be come here to make enquiries about my character and connections, every thing must import you in which either is implicated. I am accused of irregularity—to that I plead so far guilty, as that it is to you alone I will condescend to vindicate myself."

"Now that is wrong, very wrong in you," cried Mrs. Feversham, "because we who are not of the secret, not hearing your justification—"

"You have heard me accused, madam, of occasioning Mrs. Woudbe ill-rest, by the enormity of my conduct."

"Certainly, my dear, I must have been deaf else."

"And you also heard me advert to a letter I shewed Lady Gauntlet, which—"

"She denied—good."

"Then

"Then pray, my Lord Duke, have the goodness to read that letter."

"Pray, pray don't my Lord Duke!—Miss Walsingham, I acknowledge everything—I deceived you in respect to the person by whom the letters were wrote, which came to me under your cover.—I beseech you, my Lord Duke, let me have my letter."

"Did I not by accident discover the infamous advantage you took of my ignorance, in such iniquitous practices?"

"I certainly confided a case of papers to your care, one of which you have read;—Surely I am humbled enough—I entreat his Grace will let me have my letter; it is of the last importance to me."

"One word more;—do you believe I shewed Lady Gauntlet the letter you allude to?"

"I believe—I think—"

"Are you not certain that I did?"

"How can I be sure of what I did not see?"

"Well, madam, when I sent you the box with its scandalous contents, I wrote a note with

with it; I would not ask the Duke to degrade himself by reading the paper of such importance to you, if I could convince him I am not unworthy the confidence of Lady Denningcourt without it.—Give his Grace that note.”

“Lady Gauntlet, dear Lady Gauntlet, you—”

Lady Gauntlet had listened with internal rage, while her features only expressed curiosity.

Mrs. Woudbe, who had no doubt this letter from her *natural* brother, accounted for his silence, and that all her suspense would be ended the moment it came into her hands, thought no sacrifice too great to obtain it, while her friend and confidant, who neither expected nor hoped any thing about the matter, was enraged at her committing herself, and more so at involving her, in so evident a disgrace.

“I am astonished, madam,” said she, with great haughtiness, “you can appeal to me on so ridiculous a business;—I know little of your affairs, and less of your correspondence;

if

if you have improper secrets, and your confidant have betrayed them, I beg I may not be implicated—my honour—”

“Nay, Lady Gauntlet, if you go to that, and talk of honour, I might, perhaps, have as much to—”

“I entreat, Ladies,” said the Duke, “you will not traverse the scene of Brutus and Cassius,—you are both honourable Ladies, no doubt; but if my little Daniel here could bring herself so well off about her nocturnal visits at Denningcourt castle, I should be tempted to run away with her.”

“She has turned the tables, indeed my Lord,” cried Mrs. Feversham, “if confidence on one side and confusion on the other, can do it; but for my part, I like a little ocular demonstration, and think that the note or the letter ought to be produced, *pro bono publico*;—what say you Sir Solomon?”

Sir Solomon had seen through the whole business from the beginning; but as Rosa was an innocent person, whom having injured, he could never forgive, it was but natural he should seize with avidity every possible means
of

of punishing her for reminding him of what he found convenient to forget, by remaining among the sons and daughters of men; and his mortification was always in proportion; when she slipped unhurt through his fingers.

Mrs. Feverham's "what say you Sir Solomon?" was like many other of her sayings, rather ill-timed; the knight not knowing well what answer he ought to make, consistent with his profound respect for the lady of the mansion, fixed on that the most opposite to her sentiments, and inimical to their mutual interest.—"To be sure; after so much said on both sides, proof was what every body expected."

Rosa, in the mean while, struck at what the Duke said respecting her nocturnal visit to the castle, could not help admitting that the elucidation of so suspicious a circumstance ought to be as public as the occasion;—but Kattie! must she sacrifice the hope of seeing her restored to society! of concealing her frailty! and changing the artful seducer into the honourable protector:—besides, had she not solemnly promised,—and could she break

a promise, made to the distressed child of her revered and lamented friend?—but was there no medium? would no reservation be accepted?—she might however try.—

During Rosa's reverie, Miss Mushroom having hinted to Lord Delworth, that all this vile profling was vastly insipid, and he being of her opinion, they arose, arm in arm, to leave the apartment.

The Major, who never had an opinion of his own, nor adopted that of another without some new oath, swore he was as tired as nineteen devils, and made one step across the room to join them; Mr. Brudenel was also on the move; but Lady Louis, who knew more of her mother's real disposition than any other of her children, sat still, in painful expectation of an unpleasant ending to so extraordinary a scene.

Rosa had by this time made up her mind; she entreated the moving party would be seated one moment, in a manner so gently persuasive, that although Miss Mushroom put up her under lip with “at her request, indeed! well, that was a famous joke,” she permitted

permitted herself to be led back to her seat; and while the rest of the company found their attention attracted by Rosa, resumed her bouquet.

"I am going to try whether you will be tempted, my Lord, to run away with me," said Rosa, with a smile, "as you threatened, if I could explain the mystery of the castle.—You know there is an unhappy female resident there?"

"Of whom the Earl," Lady Gauntlet said, "was heartily tired."

"It was a dreadful night, my Lord, and I was sheltered from the storm, with a friend, where few in this company would chuse to go by day-light—where indeed I was forced myself."

"A riddle-me-ree," cried Mrs. Feversham.

"It was in the mausoleum of the family of the Denningcourts."

"But you had *a friend with you*," and Lady Gauntlet tried to look into her soul.

"I had, madam; and perhaps Sir Solomon Mushroom would be more clear of comprehension."

prehension, if I said, part of a friend; it was that honest cripple, Sir Solomon, John Brown, who was turned out of his own house by his own servant;—you remember John Brown, Sir Solomon.”

“My stars!” cried Mrs. Feversham,—“what the old landlord of the White Horse, is he alive after all? why I declare I should not be more surprized if his old master was to pop in among us one of these days.”

Sir Solomon had a sick qualm;—the last two persons in the world he wished to meet, had been brought to the same point in the most unfortunate moment, and, in all likelihood, leagued together ever since; and to finish the climax, a suggestion, a bare suggestion that his master might also be raised from the dead, overspread his rosy face with a pale purple.—

“You talk like a mad woman, Mrs. Feversham,” said he peevishly.

“Like a simpleton, you mean, Sir Solomon; for to be sure the old Colonel has been food for the worms long ago;—but pray is the poor man really a cripple? has he lost his legs, arms, eyes, or——”

“Only

"Only one leg."

"No more!—Lord, I thought by your talk, he had been half gone;—and pray what is become of his wife?"

"And his sons and daughters, uncles and aunts, and grandmothers?" cried Lord Delworth; "do, Miss Walsingham, tell Mrs. Feversham all about it."

Mrs. Feversham was up.—"As to uncles and aunts and grandmothers, she could say nothing to his Lordship about them, but it was her opinion, the sons and daughters of certain people would not dash much in the next century."

"Lord, how ill-natured,"—cried Miss Mushroom.

"And why not?" asked Sir Solomon.

"If Mrs. Feversham will give us leave," said Lady Gauntlet, "we will go back to the mausoleum."

"There, madam, amid old and new coffins, mouldring bones, and mementos of recent mortality, I met——"

"Not Lord Denningcourt," Mr. Brudnel was sure.

ylaO "

"No

"No, Sir, it was only his mistress, of whom it seems he is, *heartily tired*."

"Does any body know any thing of her?" asked Lady Louisa.

"One of his old Jermyn-street cronies," the Major dared to say.

"This Lady," Rosa dared say, "was never in Jermyn-street in her life."

Miss Mushroom wondered what she could be doing among coffins, and such things; it was vastly odd.

"She was kneeling ma'am."

"At prayers, quite a Magdalene," Lord Delworth supposed.

"I knew her, my Lord, when she was the pride of her respectable family, the toast of the men, the—shall I say—envy or admiration of the women, Ladies? it shall be as you please."

"The envy, too be sure," Mrs. Feverham said; "one as naturally followed the other as B followed A in the alphabet."

"Lord, what does she mean?" cried Miss Mushroom.

"I

" I knew *her*, my Lord, and she knew *me*, though both our circumstances were a little altered; I was not, indeed, in my rusty black habit; but she was all mourning, external and internal,—she was leaning on a small coffin."

" Oh how vastly shocking," cried Miss Mushroom.

" You was witness, my Lord, to an unexpected meeting between two young friends, in Denningcourt-park, but cannot from thence have an idea of that in the mausoleum; for there was more than a derangement of intellect to mourn,—it was the irreparable loss of honour which mingled the tears of a Magdalene with the anguish of a mother."

" My little Daniel," said the Duke, tears in his eyes.

" Pray, my Lord, give me my letter," cried Mrs. Woudbe.

" Never mind your letter, I will write you fifty on all sorts of subjects, do let us hear the finish of the story; I am vastly fond of hearing that pretty creature talk,—one never thinks of her rusty black habit,—and she is so like what I was a few years since."

" Then

"Then you really was not at the castle, after all."

What casuist could account for the change in Lady Gauntlet's voice and manner, at this moment?

"I beg your pardon, Lady Gauntlet,—I was.—"

"Well," and Lady Gauntlet was tempted, like the Duke, to call her a strange girl,—
"why did you not tell me all this?"

"Ah madam! why did you desert your own character?"

"I may have been deceived;—but what followed?"

"What followed is the secret of the prison-house, which, even if I should not reveal till I have but one auditor, I see the Duke will run away with me to Denningcourt, and I will run away with him all over the world."

"I hope—I hope," said the Duke,—
"I hope I am not in love with you—not foolishly in love;—but you do with me what you will."

"My letter, dear Duke,"—said Mrs. Woudbe.

"It is addressed to *you*, my little Daniel."

“ I disclaim it.”

“ But you should know what you disclaim.”

“ Oh, Miss Walsingham ! forgive, and do not ruin me ;—read it yourself.”

Had a viper stung Rosa she could not have started with more abhorrence.

“ John Brown could tell you,” said Mrs. Feversham, “ what an excellent clerk I am, Miss Walsingham ;—shall I read it ?”

“ What does Mrs. Woudbe say ?”

“ I think,” said the Duke, “ the proposal is, like the lady, clever,—and if she will read it, and ascertain, if called on, as much of the contents as will clear your honour on any future occasion—”

What ! did Mrs. Feversham hear right ? had she, whom every body delighted to humble,—she who loved civil things so well, and had so few said to her ! had she been thought clever,—which was next to handsome—by one of the first and most respected peers in the country ; how delightful ! how absolutely intoxicating !—She nodded at the Duke,—squeezed Rosa’s hand—and put the letter into her lock pocket-book.

“ And

“ And now, my little Daniel, you will trust me with the charming Countess and her exotics, while you make your toilette; for I am anxious to introduce you to your new patroness with every advantage.”

Rosa burst into tears.

“ How is this, madam?”

“ Joy, my Lord, all joy!—I feel as if at last—at last I was going home:—It is indeed a long lost dear-loved friend I am to see,—but that is not all, my heart,—I can never describe the sensations of my heart;—it is now in harmony with every living creature.—

Lady Gauntlet, I just now recollect when you delivered me from that vile Lord Lowder, and thank you for all your kindness.—

Mrs. Woudbe, I wish you may deserve to be happy.—Sir Solomon, you are my oldest acquaintance; I wish I could remember something to thank you for.—Lord Delworth,

may you and your fair bride be happy.—Major, you will certainly die of ennui when I am gone.—Mrs. Feversham, if ever I have

a house of my own, I will remember the asylum you gave me in yours.—To Lady

Louisa and Mr. Brudenel she had not been introduced, and therefore only courtied respectfully.—And now, my Lord, I will be ready in six minutes.”

The Duke seriously requested a private audience of the Countess. Rosa skipped up to her garret,—but her wardrobe was removed back into the chamber she had before occupied, and she had not, in the flutter of her joy, changed dress when she was joined by the Countess.

“ I could not let you go, Miss Walsingham, without wishing you well and happy; the many changes that will soon take place in my affairs, render it probable we may never meet again. I wish I could explain to you the secret cause of every thing that has occurred, as far as concerns myself, but it cannot be.—What, therefore, I have further to say, concerns yourself only,—you remember when you made me the confidant of your attachment to Mr. Montreville.—”

“ Oh Lady Gauntlet ! how can you wish me happy, and name that man ? why should his

his unworthy idea be conjured up at such a moment as this ?”

“ Only to remind you of what I then hinted.—I know the inference ; you will ask how I can justify myself to myself, for being the confidant of such secrets.—To this I answer,—the world is a school of experience, in which you are not yet initiated ; and though one may lament other times, one must accommodate oneself to the present.”

“ Ah, how happy am I that I am going where no accommodations of that sort are necessary.”

“ How do you know ?”

“ I have been informed on the best authority.”

“ What ! by the Duke ?—may not relations be partial ?”

“ He would not be unjust ;—but it is not from him I learn the worth of the lady to whom I shall be introduced ; it is from those endowments you shewed me the first time I saw Denningcourt, and from my own feelings, which tell me I shall never leave her.”

“ Had you not the same feelings when you came to me.”

“ No, madam ;—I had the wish, but not the presentiment, that your favour would be permanent.”

“ You have that presentiment now ?”

“ Perfectly ! entire !”

“ Well, Miss Walsingham, I see you are ready, and the Duke’s carriage waits to make amends for that ugly phantom I raised to disturb you.—I frankly tell you, that your ideas of Lady Denningcourt can never be too high raised ; you will find her all you think, and all you wish ;—but beware of Denningcourt.”

“ I fear nothing,” cried Rosa, exultingly ;
“ I, as well as the happy ladies I saw to day, shall be under Lady Denningcourt’s roof, and protected by the Duke of Athelane.—Adieu Countess.”

The adieu was returned.—Rosa flew down, positively refusing to take with her a single thing presented to her by either of her late patronesses. The Duke viewed her with parental delight ; she scarce touched the footstep ;—the carriage drove off, and she bid farewell to Delworth.

CHAP. III.

The Beggar proved to be like somebody; becomes useful; and, like the Heroines of all other famous Novels, carries a nostrum in her looks, to put M. D's. out of practice.

LADY Gauntlet having made the Duke acquainted with such of the leading traits in Rosa's story, as she recollected herself; which, considering the interest she appeared to take in it, was all fine acting, could not be very clear. He was prepared for that increase of confidence, which even in the short ride from Delworth to Denningcourt Jointure-house, our heroine frankly offered, and he as frankly accepted.

“ Well !” said the Duke, “ you are now returning where you was so desirous to remain.”

“ I feel I am,” replied Rosa :—“ nay, I am in imagination already there.”

“ Indeed ! and what happens ?”

“ Every thing happy ; I embrace my Elinor ; she knows me, and her amendment is evident ; Lady Denningcourt, just in the same sweet voice as she spoke to you, is rejoiced ; she is kind to me ; bids me take comfort to my heart, and no longer consider myself as an unhappy wanderer.”

“ All this may be realized without a miracle ; but though I profess myself an enemy to disguise, which, in general, is only a cover to low cunning and dishonest chicane, there are reasons, not necessary at present to explain, why I wish you to retain your assumed name ; that of Buhanun, will make no friend in the family of Athelane.”

The scene at the London Inn, that instant recurred to her recollection ; not, however, with the prejudices of Elinor :—it was not to be thought a woman of Lady Denningcourt’s exemplary

exemplary character, could ever have descended to intrigue with a married man, and one twice her age :—and she was too certain, both of the honour and moral rectitude of Major Buhanun, to suspect him of a criminal attachment :—a mystery, however, there certainly was, attached to the transaction, in which both him and his name were implicated ; she was silent and thoughtful.

“ I have a prescience,” continued the Duke, “ you are not quite satisfied with this arrangement ; but the motives for the change on your side still exist :—mine you will know, sooner or later, as you rise or fall in my estimation.”

“ But Lady Hopely ! she already knows.”—

“ No matter, she is in my secret, and prepared to remember or forget you, according to the result of my visit at Delworth :—your judgment, I believe, is good, and when proofs are added to belief, you will have liberty to regulate your own conduct ; in the mean time I may tell you, that though I still see the resemblance I spoke of this afternoon, your voice, your mouth, and a dimpled

smile about it, reminds me strongly of Lady Denningcourt; but, by a coincidence of natural effects, which it would puzzle a logician to define, that likeness is blended with a strong cast of him you call your first patron."

"Of Colonel Buhanun:—did you know him, sir? I have indeed been told I resembled him."

"Indeed! and by whom, pray?"

"One who knew him well; one whose memory I revere; Major Buhanun."

"Ay, *he* did know him, and so did I—too well!"—

"Too well! sir! could any body know so good a man too well!"

The Duke was silent, but after a pause—

"So the Major thought you like his nephew?"

"So like, he would at first, and indeed at times I believe to the last, think I was his daughter."

"And how are you sure he was mistaken?"

"Oh very sure; I had almost said too sure, since my mother is yet alive."

"And

“ And in indigence ?”

“ No, thank God.—I remember nothing of my father ; but have lately seen my mother in good circumstances, and married to a second husband.”

“ Go on,” said the Duke, listening with earnest attention.

“ I discovered her by accident :—if it was natural sympathy impelled her to be kind to me, it was unhappily not reciprocal ; I am afraid I am to blame ; I knew my mother, but my heart did not acknowledge her :—she had an accident : I felt the duty, but not the affection of a child ; and to this hour she is ignorant that her nurse was her deserted daughter.”

“ Your story, my little Daniel,” said the Duke, “ is full of interest ; and I never saw the Jointure-House portico with less pleasure, than at this moment :—but I am always in the library at six in the morning ; you must meet me there, and tell me all about this mother.”

The carriage having turned through a double row of venerable oaks, to the road in

front of the house, stopped at a grand, well-lighted entrance, where Lady Hopely was looking out for the carriage.

“Is it you, Duke?” said she, “and you have a companion too! then I am not disgraced by fighting her battles, after she left Edinburgh so suddenly, and as some would believe, in such gay company.—She is a good girl, or you would not have brought her.”

“Such as she is, Lady Hopely, I am pleased to call her my protégée, and beg you will have the goodness to introduce her as such to your friends.”

“Your’s! your protégée? delightful! this is an event exactly in my own way; no mortal can comprehend it:—but come, my dear, the Duke will follow: has he warned you not to say naughty words? you must forget you ever heard the name of Buhanun; to mention it before an Athelane, is a deadly sin, out of benefit of clergy.”

Again Rosa thought of the adventure at the Inn.

“Come,” continued Lady Hopely, feeling her hand tremble—“courage; if we be
of

of importance to you, you are no less so to us: the peace of an amiable woman may be restored by your means; if you succeed, we will hail you as the Thane of Athelane.

A door was thrown open, where the Countess with Miss Angus and her constant shadow Miss Bruce, were seated.

“My dear Countess,” said Lady Hopely, “I bring you the Duke’s *protégée*; I am vastly sorry for the poor man, he is already in his dotage; and though it certainly is a puzzle how a lassie he likes, I like, and you *will* like, came to be dropped among the folks at Delworth, yet he pretends he has unravelled it.”

The Duke entered, and was leading Rosa towards the Countess; when, to her confusion and mortification, she beheld the fine alabaster of her complexion, change to vivid paleness; her smooth brow curved, as if drawn by convulsion; and such a hollow eager cast in her eyes, as she gazed on her face, as totally routed all the sanguine visions hope had raised.

“Like

"Like me!" exclaimed Lady Denningcourt, in a deep half groan.

"Dear Elinor," whispered the Duke, "I thought it would strike you, but did not expect you would be so much affected:—come, be yourself then, (in a raised voice;) Lady Denningcourt, I have the honour to present Miss Walsingham—Miss Angus, Miss Bruce, my protégée."

Rosa was confused and agitated; her heart palpitating to agony, and swelling to suffocation, she could scarce support herself; and when, with a sensation more tender than joy, more intoxicating than pleasure, she felt the cold trembling lip of Lady Denningcourt press her burning cheek, she fell senseless at her feet.

"Like me!" repeated the Countess, raising her tenderly.

"Why really, now you mention it," cried Lady Hopely, with vivacity, "she *is* like you: I was struck with her features the first time I saw her; and now—oh yes, it *is* you she resembles,—but we frightened her: Miss Angus, do, my dear, convince Miss Walsingham

Walsingham she is not absolutely hideous; Margaret Bruce stares, as if she had found out something too—Well, child, what is the discovery? don't you perceive, from the tip of Miss Walsingham's ear, to the dimple in her chin, a likeness to *somebody* you know?"

Whether Miss Bruce understood or not, she blushed, but followed Miss Angus's lead in complimenting Rosa; and as Lady Denningcourt's earnest and unremitting, though silent observations on her person, became more composed, till all the unpleasant emotions of surprise gradually changed to a placid wonder, which was no restraint on her native goodness of heart, our heroine felt that she was indeed at home.

The Duke had already seen the doctor in private; and as it was, in his opinion, best to defer the meeting of the young friends till morning, Rosa obtained a reluctant permission to retire early, on account of the fatigues she had undergone during the last night and day. Miss Angus and Miss Bruce obligingly accompanied her to her chamber; the former offering her woman to assist her to undress;

Rosa

Rosa, smiling, answered, "she had always been used to be her own *femme de chambre*;" a most astonishing thing in Miss Bruce's opinion; so astonishing, that when they returned to the saloon, she communicated it to the company. They, however, were too much interested in communications of another sort, to attend to her. The Duke was relating to them what had passed at Delworth; Lady Hopely could not, without adverting to painful subjects, relate particulars of her former knowledge of the heroine of the tale; but said, "she knew her to be an uncommonly charming character."

Lady Denningcourt, pleased at such welcome addition to her family, thanked the Duke for the pains he had taken, and retired to rest, elated with the hope of seeing that health, mental and personal, on which her own depended, restored by means of the amiable stranger.

Rosa's last waking meditation, was on Lady Denningcourt; and after thanking heaven, with all the fervency of contented gratitude, for the providence of the day, she sunk into rest.

rest so profound, that it was not till Mrs. Betty Brown opened the window shutters, and pulled up the curtains, at eight the next morning, that she awoke.

“Well, Miss Rosy,” cried Betty, “here you be—who but you; and who’d a thought you’d been turned out one minit, and fotcht back the next by his Grace himself; for my part, I think there’s reason in roasting of heggs;—and the butler ses, too, as our lady did nothen in the world but stare at you all supper time; and he ses you looked very toll loll; and so, I dare say, you did; but I bag of oll love, you won’t think of calling me “Betty;” because you see, Miss, I have told our folks in the stuart’s room, as I kept a ouse of my own; and, you see, they’ll certainly think as its nothen in the world but my braggadocia.”

Rosa’s dreams were as pleasant as her rest was undisturbed: she had been with Montreville, the Montreville she knew at Pontefract, and no Mrs. Woudbe was so much as thought on: his image, once so dear, was so strongly impressed on her mind when she awoke,

awoke, that it required recollections deep and dire to chase him thence; so that Betty had got to "an ouse of her own" before she distinctly knew where she was.

"But when we are alone, may I not call you Betty?" she replied;—"you know I used to do so when you *had* a house of your own."

"Why, Miss, use is second nature, and so you had better not run no risk; for, as John Brown used to say——"

"Ah, Betty! I am glad to hear you speak of good John Brown."

"Lord, Miss Rosy, I promise you I never wish to do no such thing;—but you know what a passel of nonsense he used to stuff his poor head with out of old books;—but I bag, Miss, if our stuart, a fine portly man, and as big as three of John Brown, asks you any thing about my husband, you'll never own to he being a fowger;—and there's Mr. M'Lane—you know Mr. M'Lane, Miss?"

"How should I know him, Betty?"

"No matter who knows him, Miss, for the matter of that—a poor, proud prodigality

gality parson—as our stuart ses, all the Scotch is no better nor a passel of nothenites. His Grace, to be sure, has got a grand castle, and a heap of estates; but, then, there 'tis all over-run with poor relations, and that's what I hates; I never got no good from fitch cattle not I, sept runin up a score;—I am sure I have had my share of sufferens.”

“ But good John Brown, Betty, he made up for all.”

“ Not he, indeed, Miss, he never made up nothen to me; howsever, Mr. M'Lane sent for me to his room;—to be sure, as our stuart ses, 'twould have been better manners for he to come to mine;—for if John Brown was a sower, that was more nor he knowed; and what the eye don't see the heart don't grieve;—howsever, he said his Grace ordered me, upon my pericle, not to drop a syllabub about the blackamore Kurnel's taking you out of charity; now, as to the blackamore Kurnel, Miss Elinor, poor sole, bid me never not to mention his name; no more I ever did, only to our stuart.”

“ And

“ And why to him, Betty, if you were commanded not ? ”

“ Why, Miss, because, to tell you the truth, Mr. M‘Lane wanted to lock the stable when the steed was stolen ; for after you was turned out, I told our stuart the whole story, sept about John Brown being a sower ; and oh dear, ah dear, Miss, what a story he told me about that blackamore Kurnel !—gracious heart ! if my hair did not stand an ind !—but I must not tell no man, woman, nor child—not that it infected me so much, because I had an inkling of it once at Penry ; but least said is soonest mended, and a close tongue makes a wise head ;—so you see, Miss, one good turn deserves another : You say, as my husband was a credibility parson,—suppose a sizer man, or some other great officer, and I’ll say as I knowed you at boarding-school, and your parents was topping tradesmen, and well to do.”

Rosa was not surprised to find the Duke’s caution extend to his servants ; and had not Betty, with her vanity, betrayed such entire
indifference

indifference towards her husband, she could have been amused by it.

“ Really, Mrs. Brown,” said she, coldly, “ I know of no better praise to give your husband than what he justly merited, that of unimpeached integrity.”

“ Well, well, Miss, I don’t want to disparage John Brown no more nor you; but if Miss Elinor gets her senses again, she’ll be a Duchess, that’s a sure mark; and so, as our stuart ses, he’ll wait till my seven years is up; for you see, Miss, I can’t marry before; why I shall be a Duchess’s woman, and that will be as misbecoming for a sower’s wife as for you to be perked up among quality, when every body knowed as you was nothen but a poor Beggar Girl; but Lord, Miss, here are you keepen me, when his Grace and my Lady are waiting for nothen in the world but to go with you, to Miss Elinor.”

“ Me keeping you, Betty! why did you not tell me this before?”

“ Well, Miss, and so I should, only you would keep talking about John Brown, and such nonsense.”

Rosa

Rosa made all possible haste. "But how is Elinor to-day?"

"She was very rumbustious once this morning; but she is in her fulks now. I am sure my sufferens with her is great; sometimes she wont close her poor eyes all night; howsever, my Lady been in her room, and kissed her, and cried, and said, I dare say, twenty kind things; and so, as she never hardly speaks, we did not inspect it;—but, on a sudden,—Lord, I was fit to drop—she spoke as quiet as I do now. 'Where is my Rosa? you promised I should see her.' My Lady was ready to run wild with joy. 'You shall see her,' ses she; 'did I ever deceive you, Elinor?' I am sure the wisdom of King Solomon, no, nor that comical Joe Miller, as our stuart is always reading, could not have made a no better answer. 'No,' ses she, 'it is I who deceived you; but Rosa would have advised me better.' Well, my Lady was fit to break her heart, she was so glad; and she ran to the library to his Grace."

"I am ready," cried Rosa, eagerly.

“ Well, Miss, I must say that for your face, I said before, when you was quite a little dwarf, shivering in the wash-tub, it is worth washing, my gracious, if you don’t use nothen but water ; for my part, I always use nothen but milk of roses ; and, upon my word a very nice muslin dress too ! ”

Rosa had no longer patience ; but passing Betty while she was examining her dress, found the way to the library.

Lady Denningcourt and the Duke had been congratulating each other on the sense and recollection of Elinor, and now waited to witness an interview, which they expected would be very affecting ; but neither the interest nor importance of the event retained a place in Lady Denningcourt’s ideas, from the moment of Rosa’s entrance, her complexion and features underwent the same change as on the preceding evening, and she recoiled several paces back.

Rosa was no less grieved than mortified.

After a long pause, she again advanced ; and taking Rosa’s hand, led her nearer the light, when an anxious and solemn scrutiny of
her

her features was followed by a particular survey of her person; the fine ringlets, which shaded her elegant-formed shoulder, were put back. Tears flowed from Lady Denningcourt's eyes; she relinquished the hand she held; her own dropped, lifeless, as she turned to the Duke, and, deeply sighing, exclaimed, "Like me!"

The Duke, concerned and affected, told her she forgot Miss Athelane; then addressing Rosa with the morning salutations, asked why a gloom overspread her fair face? "You looked," he added, "at your entrance, as if conscious of the power to dispense the happiness you felt yourself."

"Oh, my Lord!" she replied, "how flattering to my heart would that consciousness be! but I sink under a contrary feeling; misfortune pursues me even here: if my unhappy resemblance must always so affect Lady Denningcourt, let me be rather banished her presence for ever than give her pain."

"Fear it not," replied the Duke, "when it ceases to surprise, it will please; she will behold you with more delight than pain."

"That

"That time," joined Lady Denningcourt, with compassion, "is already come, Miss Walsingham; and if you were not endeared to me by the soothing hope of contributing to the restoration of my Elinor, your face is such a passport to my affection, that I could have selected you from a multitude, as an object of regard; and when I tell you it is the fond choice of my virgin love, the husband of my heart, the——yes, I owe you my confidence, for the pain I have given you——the father of my Elinor, you resemble——"

"Heavenly God!" cried Rosa, starting back, "was Colonel Buhanun the father of Elinor?"

Lady Denningcourt sunk on a sofa.—
"What!" cried she, shaking from head to foot, "did you know Colonel Buhanun?"

Rosa wept.

"What idea burns on my brain," continued the Countess. "How old are you?"

"About the age of Miss Athelane."

"Then," replied the Countess, as if relieved from a painful surmise, "it cannot be."

"Still you forget Miss Athelane, madam," said the Duke.

"No, ah, no! but I remember her father! You, Miss Walsingham, could not know Colonel Buhanun? you have not been in India?"

"Forgive me, Sir," cried Rosa, folding her hands in a supplicating attitude.

"Forgive you! what have you done?" asked Lady Denningcourt—"why won't you answer me? did you, could you know Colonel Buhanun?"

The Duke again reminded her of Miss Athelane. "You will," he added, "be unfit for the interview you were so anxious to witness."

"I am unfit already, Sir;—why are you a party in so ill-timed a reserve? Tell me, Miss Walsingham, I conjure you, if you regard my peace, were you related to Colonel Buhanun?"

Rosa answered, without hesitation, in the negative.

"What, then, means this apparent mystery? did you know him?"

Rosa

Rosa threw herself on her knees: she no longer took a cautionary lesson from the Duke's looks; she implored Lady Denningcourt's pardon for being surprised into a mistake, against which she had been warned; but whatever might be the consequence to herself, she could not bear to see her ladyship pained by a suspense it was in her power to relieve. "You know, madam," she continued, "that I am wretched and friendless, but not *how* wretched, and *how* friendless:—that my mother, a common mendicant, abandoned me in my infancy, left me a houseless, starving Little Beggar;—that I was taken, relieved, beloved, and educated, by the best and most charitable of men—by the ever-lamented Colonel Buhanun;—and Oh!" she cried, with folded hands, and streaming eyes, while Lady Denningcourt sat fixed and pale as marble, "let not that which was the first blessing and advantage of my humble existence now be turned to my misfortune; let not the poor deserted child, whose miseries found an easy access to the heart of benevolence, become on that account the un-

happy object of your aversion. Alas! madam, however he may have offended *you*, I can never cease to remember the emanations of his generous soul; I owe to him that I am not a companion of vice, as well as poverty; and my tears must flow for him as long as I have memory."

"How long," asked Lady Denningcourt, in a voice scarce articulate, "have you left India?"

India! Rosa never was out of Britain.

Where then did she see Colonel Buhanun?
At Penry.

"God of heaven!"

Yes, it was there, when abandoned by her mother, Rosa was relieved by Colonel Buhanun.

Lady Denningcourt fell back, and was carried senseless to her chamber.

Lady Hopely, who was not an early riser, being alarmed, and informed by the Duke of what had passed, judged, that as the part of Rosa's history which would most afflict the Countess, was the residence of the Colonel in England, it would most properly come
from

from themselves when she was perfectly recovered; accordingly she hastened to her chamber, while the Duke, anxious to relieve Rosa from the grief and regret she felt at having caused Lady Denningcourt's indisposition, as well as to try the effect of her presence on Elinor, proposed to accompany her to her friend.

Never had Rosa stood more in need of a moment to collect her thoughts; but not daring to ask for indulgence at so interesting a period, she followed the Duke's lead to the boudoir, where she had first seen Elinor, which was the only place where she would take nourishment; and indeed was so fond of it, that it was often with difficulty she could be prevailed on to sleep out of it.

She had waited a few minutes after the Countess left her in all the flutters of impatient expectation, but had now sunk into a sullen gloom, from which no effort could rouse her.

"I have brought your Rosa, my dear Miss Athelane; won't you welcome her?" said the Duke.

G 3

"Elinor!

"Elinor! my dear Elinor! won't you speak to your Rosa? nor so much as look at her?"

"She is in her fulks," whispered Betty, "and perhaps won't speak this week."

"Elinor! dear Elinor!" repeated Rosa.

The fair statue was immovable, and gave no sign of intellect.

Perhaps this was the most trying affliction Rosa ever felt: she wept, embraced, and still called on her dear Elinor without the least effect.

The disappointment of the Duke was visible.

The doctor, however, was not discouraged: he advised her being left to her attendants; and the Duke inquired, in a voice of dejection, if the ladies were in the breakfast-room? finding they were not, he told Rosa he should meet her there when the bell rung; and she was going to her chamber, when a footman informed her a person wanted to speak to her.

"To me!" cried Rosa.

"Yes;

“ Yes; and as he was a poor cripple, and seemed to want charity, the man said he had left him in the little hall.”

Rosa had hoped John Brown was on his way to Edinburgh; but as this was unquestionably him, she hastened to the little hall.

The gardener, who carried her packet to the castle, had found it “ mortal hot walking;” and meeting at the door of an hedge ale-house, other as hot souls as his own, talked so oddly when he staggered across the park and delivered the packet, that John lamented he had

“ Taken an enemy into his mouth, to steal away his brains.”

The man was conscious of no such theft; on the contrary, as he flattered himself nobody could talk better, he entered into such an account of affairs at Delworth, as convinced honest John, that, as he said, the

“ Jewel of a maid is her good name;

“ And no legacy so rich as honesty.”

his favourite maid Rosa had lost the one, and was suspected by the inmates of Del-

worth, to have parted with the other. John thought, if there were a maid in the world, who was worthy to retain this jewel, it was Rosa; and therefore, after consulting his pillow on the business, he resolved to go to Delworth, and endeavour to learn the state of affairs from herself.

“Why,” said he, on approaching Delworth House, “Why should I be more afraid to enter this gate, than I have been at storming a citadel?”

“——— Our doubts are traitors,

“And make us lose the good we oft might win,

“By fearing to attempt.”———

So on stumped John,

———“Fearful commentings,”

said he, as he opened the gate of the courtyard,

“Are leaden servitors to dull delay.

In that moment he was struck dumb with astonishment, at seeing the rosy gills, the white hat, the morocco slippers, the chintz morning frock; in short, at seeing Sir Solomon Mushroom altogether, stalking from the stables, where his fine horses stood, to the back entrance of the house.

“The

“ The image of a wicked, heinous fault

“ Is in his eye,”

quoth John; “ and God forgive me if I don’t preface some mischief to poor Miss Rosy; but though he does

“ Bestride the world like a Colossus,”

yet it is, as my poor Colonel said, as well to know an evil, as to fear it; and,

“ Great men have reaching hands;”

so I will take off my hat, which is what I never did when I was a gentleman soldier, to any body but my Colonel, and my wife, and ask his honour—honour signifies nothing when addressed to such men as Sir Solomon Mushroom—if he can help me to the sight of Miss Rosy.”

“ No—she is not here, she is gone,” in a loud rough voice, as Sir Solomon entered the house, had like to have annihilated poor John.

“ Ah master timber-toe,” cried one of the grooms, who remembered him passing

on the outside of the stage, "what you are new rigged? you are got into good plight."

This bit of wit, which was accompanied with a roll of the tongue and a leer of the eye at another groom, went to John's heart.

"What," said he, "shall it be ever said, that John Brown

"Cram'd his maw, or cloth'd his back

"From filthy vice?"

and so, without saying another word, John returned to the castle; and while putting on his own old clothes,

"'Tis the mind,"

said he,

"makes the body rich;

"And as the sun breaks through the darkest cloud,

"So honour shineth in the meanest habit."

And now I think I can have heart to speak to the great lady herself, who was so honourable to Miss Rosa; for certainly talking loud with another man's coat on one's back, except indeed the King's coat, is like fighting under a false banner."

Before he got out of the park, he met the same gardener's labourer who brought him
him

him the packet, and from him learned where Rosa was.—“ So here,” said he, having given an account of the morning’s employment, “ here I am with a

“ Thousand hearts within my bosom.”

Women—Miss Rosy—

“ Women are not in their best fortunes strong,”

much less when every fool is ready to put upon them, and.

“ Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow,

“ Thou shalt not escape calumny,”

and that it is, Miss, that makes me think so much of my poor Betty ;” and John wiped his eye with a piece of an old silk handkerchief.

Rosa, impatient to give ease to his honest heart, could not find words or breath to tell him half fast enough, how happily every thing had turned out. She wished also to tell him of his “ poor Betty ;” but certain that poverty would damp his welcome, was begging him to return to Denningcourt Castle, and change his old clothes for those better

ones, which he knew were not the price of dishonesty, when Mrs. Betty put first her head, and then her whole well dressed figure, in at the door, with "Lord Miss, who could think you would stand here, shilly shally, with that poor object, while the Duke and the two young ladies, are waiting for you to breakfast.—You may go to the servants' hall, friend; all the poor folk that come here, eat and drink as much as they like.—Oh Miss Rosy, here's our stuart coming; and now for all he is such a portly man, and worth a power of money, you'll see how perspective he behaves to me, and to you too, for all I told him about the blackamoor kurnel."

The steward, a man, as Betty said, as big as three of John, entered from one door of the little hall, in his way to the other; he bowed to Rosa, smiled at Betty, and having great weight to carry, went on in a cautious, consequential pace.

John staggered back; Rosa advanced towards him, and Betty turned her front to the smiling steward. John, at length, unable to contain the overflow of his feeling, stumped up

up to his wife, caught her in his arms, and sobbed "Betty—my dear Betty."

Betty sent forth a succession of long screams, and John expected a fit, but they were a sort of ungenteel infirmity Betty had left off; she struggled with more than female strength, till she had not only emancipated herself, but thrown John down; then running toward the steward, cried, "Oh goodness! oh gracious! a ghost! a ghost! save me from the ghost!"

The steward stopped with a ready "What's the matter?—who are you?"

"My dear Betty," cried John, having gained his foot, and wiping his eyes with the bit of silk handkerchief, "have you quite forgot me? or has joy bewildered your senses? ah my poor girl, alack, alack,

"Grief hath changed me since you saw me last;

"And careful hours, with time's deformed hand,

"Have written strange defeatures in my face."

"As to writing," replied Betty, turning her eyes away with disgust, "nobody never wrote no letter to me; and I don't believe I never seed your yellor face in my life."

Betty!

"Betty !" and John's yellow face expressed an equal portion of anger and surprise,

"Disgrace have of late knock'd too often at my door."

"There let it knock,—it shan't come to mine."

"Betty, you cannot have forgot your husband? for though

"Prosperity is the very bond of love,

"Whose fresh complexion, and whose heart together,

"Affliction alters."

"Fresh complexion ! why sure you don't go to pretend to fresh complexion? I am sure it makes me sick to look at you."

John's colour rose ; "I am sorry you are grown so nice, Mrs. Brown ; but if you are altered, I am not."

"Why then I advise you to alter, for you cant never change for the worst."

"Woman ! woman !

"Be not thy tongue thy own shame's orator ;

"Look sweet, speak fair, become disloyalty ;

"Apparel vice like virtue's harbinger ;

"Bear a fair presence, though your heart *be* tainted."

Poor

Poor Betty's misfortune had come upon her in the moment least expected, and she was in a most perplexing dilemma; Mr. Steward's habitual smile was changed to earnest attention; and while Rosa walked to a window to avoid appeals from either of the contending parties, he stood firmly noting all that passed.

"Why dost look so strangely, wife? I left thee to perform a dear duty; but in all my sufferings, I have been faithful, Ah Betty!

"'Tis one thing to be tempted, another to fall."

"As to tempting, I defy Satan and all his imps; and may be you are one of them in the likeness of John Brown, my husband, who went away and left me to be put upon by every body; I don't believe you are he no more nor nothing."

"You don't wish to believe it, Betty, but

"There are no tricks in plain and simple faith."

"Tricks! I believe you know more about tricks nor me; but don't think to trick me; I married you, if it be you, when you was a
tight

tight able man, and I shan't never go to take up with a cripple, as got hardly no coat to his back."

John put his piece of handkerchief in his pocket.

" You are not asked, Betty, to take up with the cripple ; but

———— " Do not tempt my misery

" Left that it make me so unsound a man

" As to upbraid you with those kindneses

" That I have done for you."

" Me make you unsound ! is that all you learn in your books ? I am sure nobody can't call a man with but one leg a sound man. I don't care that for your speeches out of old tatter'd books ;" and Betty very ungraciously threw a piece of paper, which she had been twisting into all sorts of forms, at her liege lord.

" Keep thy temper, however, Betty ; see that you do nothing to repent of, for

" The wounds heal ill that men do give themselves."

" Fiddle

" Fiddle faddle about wounds and man ;
I don't know that I am going to give myself
any thing like it ; and as to repenting, I am
not afraid of no such thing ; you left me—"

" On a dear duty, Betty."

" Duty ! what duty can a man have to
leave his wife."

As this smart repartee of Betty, was accompanied with a sly leer at Master Steward,
as Master Steward answered with a half smile,
and as neither the one nor the other escaped
the observation of honest John,

" Poor woman !" quoth he, in an accent
of mingled pity and indignation,

" Head strong liberty is lash'd with woe."

And though a man is degraded by contention with a woman ; though to punish them

—————" 'Tis greater skill,

" In true hate, to let them have their will ;

" The very devils cannot please them better."

Yet, as I do not hate thee, I will tell
thee !' —

As John's voice was raised, Mr. Steward
advised him to speak lower ; adding, " really
friend

friend, when you answer ladies, it should be in civiller terms."

"I am not bound to please thee with my answers."

"Or, if I were,

"An honest tale speeds best being plainly told."

John's arm and stump began to work alternately.

Betty's head was toss'd, and her brow knit in a very pretty scornful manner; but it was no longer safe to trifle with John; he stepped up close to her, flourishing not one arm but both;—"If that great man is of consequence to you, Mrs. Brown, bid him not meddle—and

"Fye, fye, unknit that threatening unkind brow,

"And dart not scornful glances from those eyes,

"To wound thy lord, thy king, thy master."

Betty, though frightened, answered, having first got round the other side of the Steward,—that she cared for no Lord but my Lord Duke, nor no King but King George, and she was old enough and wise enough to govern herself.

"Woman,

"Woman, woman!" quoth John, encreasing in warmth,

"Such duty as the subject owes his prince,

"Even such a woman oweth her true Lord."

"Lord help your crazy head," cried Betty, in an humbler tone of voice, and drawing still near the Steward.

"Keep off friend," quoth Master Steward.

"And why so?"

—"Thou *friend* of an ill fashion—"

nay,

"Look not big, nor storm, nor stare, nor fret;"

"I stay here on my bond."

My wife

"Is my goods, my chattels, she is my house, my household stuff, my field, my barn, my horse, my ox, my ass, my any thing, and here she stands, touch her who dare."

Mr. Steward could not have been Mr. Steward, in the Denningcourt family, had he not been a man of moral conduct; and though he had conducted himself with a spice of gallantry

lantry, which convinced Betty she might be Mr. Steward's lady, it was as far from his intention as interest, to separate man and wife, he therefore bid John Brown speak in a lower key, and added, as he moved his unwieldy person out of the hall, nobody wished to deprive him of his right.

Poor Betty, whose courage subsided the instant her great support left her, now began to whine;—"Lord, John Brown," she cried, "how can you talk so about goods and chattels, and I don't know what; I don't know what goods and chattels you may have, but I have not got nothing but my cloaths, and I shall never part with none of them; and as to house and household stuff, why Lord, they are all sold for almost nothen, and enough too,—the horse was spavined, and the household stuff worm-eaten; but then as to oxesses and asses, why you know we never had no such thing belonging to us."

John could not see Betty's tears unmoved; he took out his piece of handkerchief, "Oh Betty, he cried,

"My better parts are all thrown down."

"To

“ To be sure they are, John Brown, every body knows ones legs is every body’s better part.”

“ Hard hearted woman ! thou dost not feel that

———“ Praising what is lost

“ Makes the remembrance more dear.”

But I will not trouble thee, I know I left thee to sorrow ;

“ And he that stands on a slippery place

“ Makes nice of no vile hold to stay himself up.”

“ Sorrow indeed ! yes and slippery enough I should have found it, for there I was like to lose the use of *both my* legs ; nobody knows what has been my sufferens,—and after all, when I am picking up a little, to have a husband as I thought dead and buried, come out of his peaceful grave, when nobody never thought of no such thing.—Oh dear, dear, it is too bad.”

“ ’Tis a sore affliction, indeed Betty,” replied John, with a melancholy smile, but

———“ Weariness

——“ Weariness can snore on the flint,
“ While resty sloth pines on the down pillow.”

“ Ay John, I always told you, that you
was good at snoring.”

“ Well Betty, I forgive thy “ biting
words,” I know

“ How quickly nature falls to revolt

“ When gold becomes her object.”

“ But farewell, wife,

“ We’ll no more meet, no more see one another ;

“ But yet thou art my flesh and blood.”

—Well no matter,—if ever John Brown
should again have money or friends, thou
shalt want neither ; if not

“ —— Life being weary of worldly bars

“ Never lacks power to dismiss itself ;”

and this cripple and yellow face shall make
thee sick no more.”

Rosa had continued an ear-witness of the
matrimonial discord, sympathising with the
feelings of honest John, but not chusing to
seem to observe them, and hoping the silence
that

that followed his last speech, preceded a reconciliation, till, after two minutes dead silence, Betty burst out, crying and lamenting,

Never, there never was so misfortunate a woman: she supposed, now, the poor simple man was off again; and what good was a husband to a poor woman, when he was always taking such freaks, and come back when nobody wanted him without all his limbs;—and now, God knew, whether he would ever come back; or if he did, whether he might not leave all his limbs behind, and so come home blind as well as lame. Oh! nobody who once kept a house of their own, was never so misfortunate.

“Where is he gone?” said Rosa, vexed and surprised, on turning round, to see only Betty.

“Gone, Miss! who can tell? ’tis a long lane that has no turning; but you see, Miss, there is no end to my sufferens;—but, however, I shan’t vex myself no more about him; enough is never enough with him. How he runs on with rig my roll stuff out of silly books,

books, and no sooner come back then off he is again;—oh, dear, dear! what a misfortunate person I am; I never can shew my nose in the stuart's room no more."

"I must tell you, Mrs. Brown, (and Rosa's voice, as well as colour, rose) it would be more to your credit to think less of any other man, and more of the good creature you sent away so unfeelingly."

"Who me, Miss! me sent him away! geminigig! as our stuart ses, did he not pop off as fast as if he had twenty legs, making foolish speeches all the while, and banging his arms, as if the weather had been frosty; and was not my heart in my mouth to call him back? and did'nt I fall a crying fit to break—but, Lord, if there is not my bell! Miss, you must go to breakfast. Again! what's the matter now?"

"Stop, Betty—it is Elinor's bell?"

Betty did not stop; and Rosa, after hesitating a short time whether she should go to the breakfast-room or follow her, deciding on the latter, she was met near Elinor's door by Betty, running and crying, "Oh, dear!

Miss Elinor is in one of her rumbustious fits,—I must fetch the doctor.”

Scarce had she spoke, before first Dido, and then Elinor rushed after her.

“My dear, dear Elinor!” cried Rosa.

“Ah, Rosa! my own dear Rosa! are you indeed come back?”

The violence at once subsided; and when the doctor followed Betty, he found his patient weeping in the arms of her friend.

As he considered this a certain sign of convalescence, he imparted the grateful tidings immediately to the Duke, who gladly carried it to Lady Denningcourt; and never, indeed, was she in greater need of consolation.

When the Countess heard from her Lord the strange and, to her, incredible account of the recent death, as he heard it from Major Buhanun, of a man whom she had long considered as no more, she was at court; and the Duke of Athelane happening to be in the circle, she mentioned it to him as an odd and groundless report. The manner in which he received it, however, alarmed her;

and when on further investigation, she found he actually had survived his intended suicide, the regret she felt was as poignant and perhaps lasting as when the news of his death was received first at Athelane.

But it is impossible to paint the distracting agony of her soul, when she understood he had been in England, and must have heard, have known, nay, perhaps seen her the contented and apparently happy wife of another; while he, in ill health, deprived of all comfort, self-estranged from a family to whom he was dear, from a paternal home, and from a country he loved, had pined among strangers, in an obscure village, abhorring his own existence, and, no doubt, cursing hers.

The consolations of friendship were at this moment vain: in vain was she reminded of her ignorance of his fate and the innocence of her intentions; his honour, his love, and his injuries, were before her; her own heart arraigned her, and she declared her prospects were shut in for ever.

Although the Duke was extremely afflicted, and indeed blamed himself for what had happened

pened, he knew the dignified simplicity of Lady Denningcourt's soul; no injury, injustice, or calamity, by which she could herself be the immediate sufferer, would have so overwhelmed her with sorrow, or so entirely deprived her of fortitude; but it was a sense of wrong, of affliction, of agony, inflicted on another by her means that only could reduce her to despair. She had in this instance been the source of misery to one who was past reparation; she had injured, where no atonement could be offered; she had offended where no pardon could be dispensed; she had defaced her own image, in the heart where it was worshipped; and it was by her means the man of woes had died the man of wrongs.

To renovate her fortitude, and render her accessible to comfort, it was first necessary to reconcile her in some degree to herself. The Duke did not attempt to reason on what he knew she considered as established facts: he allowed Wallace Buhanun all the charms of person and mind she insisted he possessed; but whatever were his virtues, he

H 2

wanted

wanted the energy which can only do honour to the Creator: he knew, no doubt, what was right, but wanted resolution to reduce knowledge to practice; and it was from his own weakness, not hers, all his misfortunes proceeded. No logic can excuse the deviation from moral rectitude, which could tempt a man to violate the law of hospitality, by encouraging in himself, or seeking to inspire another, with a passion destructive of the happiness of his entertainer and benefactor. Love, he insisted, like vice, if opposed, would be conquered; and the first struggle insured victory; but, like vice also, the first lapse was seldom—very seldom recoverable. When therefore, Wallace Buhanun, instead of resisting a fascination, no doubt powerful, and seceding from the tempting ruin, indulged his presumptuous wishes, at the expence of the peace of his patron's family, he laid himself the foundation of that ruin which eventually overwhelmed him: he has suffered, but have not we also suffered? What a brother was mine! cut off by sorrow in the meridian of his days; what a mother, what
a son

a son was lost to the House of Athelane! "If you had *not* been the wife of Earl Denningcourt, could you have bound your soul to the man from whom the glory of our race, the young Dungaron, received his death-blow?"

"Do you call this consolation, Duke?" said Lady Hopely.

"I call it justice," he replied; "and Lady Denningcourt feels it."

"If it be justice, it is justice unblended with mercy, to charge on one so young and amiable, a crime forced on him by the violence of others."

"Have I done this, niece? no, I trace the evil to its source, but I pity the victim—I am even ready to admit the punishment severe."

"Severe! ah, uncle! what must have been his feelings, his resentment, his hatred of the cause! have you considered this?"

"I have considered, there is in existence a part of this unhappy man, which heaven in its mercy spares, to give you the power of appeasing your own self-upbraidings;—if

you feel you have not requited the tenderness of the father, transfer it to his child; if you are conscious of injuring him, though innocently, make the reparation to her; if your heart is unchangeable, love him in his offspring, acknowledge her openly in the face of the world. You cannot, perhaps, in law legitimate her; but what being of honour or humanity will respect her or you the less on that account? She has been long without a mother."

"Alas! my dear uncle, what a dreadful thought is that! does not the angry spirit of the father this moment charge me with that neglect of his child, which is the latent cause of her misfortune?"

"Appease that angry spirit, then, by marking the wisdom, the justice, the mercy of an over-ruling Providence: The father rescues an infant Beggar from all the horrors of wretchedness at the very place where, unknown to him, his own child resides; that Beggar lives to restore the daughter of her benefactor to a blessing more dear than life. Hah! see, Lady Denningcourt, (leading her

to

to the window) there is your child, the child of him for whom you mourn; she has been worse than dead—a miracle is wrought in her favour; her reason, dreadful to thought, has been taken from her—it is returning, but her mother is insensible to the blessing—“*her prospects are shut in for ever.*”

“It is indeed my child! she hangs on the arm of her friend; she looks composed. God be praised! But ah, uncle! how is it that this happy Beggar—happy, since beloved by Wallace Buhanun—how is it that she bears his image so exact? I once thought, but I hated myself—”

The Duke understood the hint—it had occurred to himself; but her age was the proof of the Colonel’s faith to his then loved Elinor.

“Look,” cried Lady Hopely, “Elinor stops; she looks up—dear creature, she courtesies. Won’t you go down? I protest I must.”

The Duke thought they had better leave her to her friend. Lady Denningcourt kissed her hand, and retired from the win-

dow, if not consoled by the Duke's arguments, at least convinced they were just.

Rosa had the comfort now to be fully recognized: they walked in the park full two hours, and then Elinor wished to return to the boudoir.

"You will hate me, Rosa," said she, as she entered.

"Hate you! hate my Elinor! impossible!"

"I fear you will, when you know all, because I hated myself, and had no friend near me; but you are come at last;—if you had been here—but now you are here, will you make my poor aching heart easy? I have been very ill; sorrow was like a great sea before me, and I saw no way to escape drowning: but if you would tell me one thing, it would do me almost as much good as seeing you."

"Need I say, my Elinor?"

"Oh, no! you need only tell me, and don't deceive your poor Elinor, what have they done with the poor boy?"

Betty,

Betty, who chose to know every thing, was ignorant in this point; and Rosa answered, with hesitation, "I will not deceive you, but I really do not know."

Elinor shrieked—"Then he is dead—they tied him to the chariot wheels—he is killed." Her hands relaxed, her eyes fixed on the ground, and she relapsed into gloom and silence.

"There now," cried Betty—"did ever mortal see the like! she is in her fulks again."

The doctor, more sure of her perfect recovery from short relapses, again advising Rosa to leave her, she retired to her chamber, with no time, as Betty gravely assured her, to make her toilet before dinner, for that the warning bell would ring in half an hour, when the ladies always assembled in the drawing-room; for her part, it took her near double the time to do her hair only, and therefore she knowed it was impossible for any body to make themselves decent in half an hour.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing, among other marvellous and incredible things, that some of the exiles from Scotland are pleased to return thither.

FEW ladies dispatched the orgies of the toilet with more skill, or in less time than Rosa ;—she was not only dressed with her usual elegant neatness before the warning bell rung, but had a few minutes left for wonder and reflection.

John would now, she certainly thought, be on his journey to Edinburgh : She had not the least idea of any law, but that law of right and wrong God has implanted in the nature of the most ignorant of mankind ; yet she

she doubted whether an acknowledged daughter of Colonel Buhanun's, of whose existence he was evidently ignorant, would not supercede any other claim, even if the will, so firmly insisted on by John, and denied by Sir Solomon Mushroom, existed. Had the property, considerable as it was, been vested in her, it would have been no question; but, however the guardians of the heirs and the protector of Elinor might agree, the reward of John's faithful attachment to his master was certain; and as Betty did not just now deserve to be sharer in the satisfaction she felt on that account, that poor unfortunate woman was suffered to bewail poor John Brown's lost leg, his poverty and silly stuff out of old books, while she officiously assisted Rosa to dress, without one word of comfort.

At length the signal being given, Rosa hastened down, and after passing the boudoir, where Elinor remained in the same humour and position, entered the drawing room.—The Duke, the two Countesses, and the young ladies were already assembled.

Lady Denningcourt sat near a window, her woman standing behind her with her fan and salts.—Rosa wished to speak—but had not power.

The Countess viewed her attentively, and while a tear strayed down her pale cheek, motioned her woman to reach a chair, and, beckoning to Rosa, drew it near her own.

“Do not apprehend, Miss Walsingham,” said she, “that the obligation I owe you on my Elinor’s account, can be less binding because God has stamped his most perfect image on your countenance; or that I shall regard you less because you were distinguished by the husband of my unalterable affection;—ah no, amiable, lovely girl, beware how you make any request to me, which I ought not to grant, since I know I feel I cannot resist any thing enforced by the animated expression so dear, so familiar, and so irresistible.”

Rosa was transported;—she wept,—her sobs were audible, and when the interesting Countess again embraced her, she fell at her feet.

From

From this hour Elinor was the acknowledged daughter of the Countess of Denningcourt, the grand niece of the Duke of Athelane; and from this hour also our heroine rivalled her in the affections of her mother, and totally eclipsed her in those of the Duke.

The amiable, generous, and disinterested Miss Angus was a true Athelane; her fortune was large and independent, and had the whole of her future expectations vanished when Elinor was acknowledged, she would have been happy,

Not so Miss Bruce;—the head of that poor young lady, against every sort of probability, still run on Mr. Angus and a ducal coronet;—she had but two solid comforts at this moment to support her under a million of mortifications; first, that Miss Athelane never would be restored to her perfect senses; second, that Mr. Angus had never seen the enchanting Miss Walsingham; and these, like many other of the solid comforts which short sighted mortals grapple to their hearts,

“ Like snow that falls upon the river,—

“ Once white, then melts away for ever.

Of

Of this, however, she had so little apprehension, that while the tear of sympathy filled every other eye, her dull ones were running over the newspapers in search of the scandal of the day.

"Have you any thing new, Margaret?" asked Lady Hopely.

"You shall judge, ma'am."—

"The Lady who, rather prematurely, calls herself Countess Dowager of Gauntlet, was, we are informed, yesterday at court; the difficulty about her reception was got over on account of her venerable father, whose age and former services commanded respect."

"That may be new, Miss Bruce, but it is not truth," said Lady Denningcourt.

"True! No, certainly, ma'am; one never expects truth in the small-talk of a newspaper."

"If I were Lady Chancellor," rejoined Lady Hopely, "I would move to manage that business otherwise."

"You would not restrain the liberty of the press, Countess?"

"No

"No Duke;—I would only stop the licentiousness of it."

"I don't exactly see how one end, however desirable, is to be attained, without attacking the other more valuable one."

"Nothing more easy:—Truth they say is a libel; now truth should *not* be a libel;—I would tolerate the press in all sorts of trifisms—but for those despicable wretches who trade with the feelings of individuals, who eat, drink, and wear the peace of private families, who make anguish their sport, and murder character,—I would invent a torture worse than those they inflict, if that were in nature."

"That would be a little cruel, Lady Hope-ly, for you would possibly oblige a number of very dashing fellows, who are equally ashamed to 'dig' or 'beg,' to take purses."

"I should then deserve well of my country, by exalting them in the only way they can be exalted for the benefit of the public."

"Here, here," cried Miss Bruce, "the paragraph is contradicted in both the evening papers."

“ Read, Margaret, before the contradiction is contradicted.”

Miss Bruce read: - “ *We are authorised to contradict the paragraph in a morning paper, relative to the appearance at court of the lady, whom it is scarcely premature to style Countess Dowager of Gauntlet.— The gallant veteran, her father, Admiral Herbert, presented his grandson, and was honoured with a long audience in the closet, but his daughter was not present.*”

Lady Denningcourt would have been surprised if she had; “ if the son,” she continued, “ has not better proof of his claims, than the existence of his mother, our neighbour will not be uncountessed.”

Miss Angus thought him very handsome; and Lady Hopely, who had often met him, very clever.

The Duke, who had not been in London, the last winter, knew little of the story.

There were somewhere among her father's papers, Lady Denningcourt thought, a very interesting account of his poor mother, the late Countess.

“ Late

"Late Countess!" Lady Hopely was sure she was living.

Lady Denningcourt was certain she was drowned when the Vallerton yacht was lost.

"Then, depend upon it, that horrid Earl was married to two wives," said Lady Hopely; "for I am certain that this young man's mother is forth coming."

"We shall see," replied Lady Denningcourt, with an incredulous look.

Every syllable of this conversation made its way to Rosa's heart; her seat grew uneasy; the newspapers were read out, but she heard nothing more, 'till roused from a deep reverie by the movement of the company to the eating saloon.

Elinor's gloomy fit still continuing, the ladies left the Duke, Chaplain and Doctor, over their bottle, and withdrew into the music room. Miss Bruce run her thick-ended fingers over Miss Angus's harp, and snapp'd a string in a moment.

Margaret Bruce, Lady Hopely said, was always talking nonsense, or doing mischief, except

except when she was making caricatures, or bad verses.

Miss Bruce was awkwardly trying to repair the accident.

"Shall I assist you?" asked Rosa.

"Do you know how?"

"I will try."

"There's a good soul;—Lady Hopely, she whispered, is always making bad worse, and Angus will be so angry!—Why you have don't it already."

Rosa run her taper fingers over the strings just as Miss Angus entered.

"You are obliged to Margaret, I assure, you, Angus," cried Lady Hopely, "she put your harp out of tune on purpose to let you know Miss Walsingham is a scientific performer; but I have heard of her harp and her grand piano forte; they were set to roup and fold."

"Sold!" and Rosa coloured.

"Just so:—Doctor Cameron bought them."

Miss Angus was delighted to hear Rosa could play.—She performed very ill herself, she said, but hoped to improve.

Lady

Lady Denningcourt left her seat, and asked Rosa to play one lesson. Never was request made with more interest, and complied with with more grace ;—the attractions of the music was stronger than the bottle,—the gentlemen entered.

“ I cannot understand,” said Lady Denningcourt, “ how you have attained so many accomplishments at a country boarding-school.”

“ The conductress of that boarding school,” Rosa replied, her cheeks tinged with generous energy, “ was herself an adept in every science taught under her roof ; my story interested her ; I owe more than words can pay to her particular care.”

“ Vastly well, Miss Walsingham ; Mrs. Harley,” the Duke said, “ could not wish for a more able eulogist.”

“ Besides this advantage,” resumed Rosa, “ I awoke from my golden vision in time to make those accomplishments useful which I began for ornament ; and the harp being subject to accidents, I learned to tune well from necessity ; I found this very useful. Some of
the

the ladies, Miss Athelane in particular, never touched her harp, without—”

“ Miss Athelane !” Lady Denningcourt never understood she could touch it at all.

“ She may have neglected it,—she was so indulged.”

“ Indulged ! was she so much indulged ? and was that Dr. Croak really fond of her ?”

“ No young lady in the school had so fond a father.”

“ Indeed ! Have we not been too hard on this poor man, Duke ?”

“ What, because while he cheated her of her little fortune, he indulged her improperly ? does it not strike you, that if you had not been in a situation to claim her, she must eventually have been reduced to the indigence from which her father rescued this charming girl ; had she been properly managed, such as Miss Walsingham is, she would have been.”

Rosa, though she knew Elinor's deficiencies were not the consequence of neglect, could say nothing on the subject, and therefore

fore, vexed she had begun it, run over the strings of the harp to change it.

Miss Walsingham could sing, Miss Angus was sure.

Rosa did not affect to disclaim a talent she was conscious of possessing in a superior degree.

Well, if Miss Bruce wrote a novel, Miss Walsingham should be her heroine; she had all the requisites.

Lady Hopely advised her not to attempt it—she would only spoil a good story.

“Some people might perhaps think,” said Miss Bruce, with pique, “I could embellish a bad one.”

“Then they would neither know you nor the story,” replied Lady Hopely.

“A song, dear Miss Walsingham,” cried Miss Angus.

“To end the battle of tongues,” said Lady Hopely.

A sudden thought struck Rosa; she removed the harp close to the open window, and sung an air from Orpheus, which was so great a favorite with Mrs. Harley, that every child

in her school played and sung it; at the second repetition of "Eurydice," Elinor and Dido hastily left the boudoir; the former seated herself by Rosa's side, and the latter lay at her feet.

When the air was ended, Elinor looked round, and meeting the humid eye of Lady Denningcourt, hastily arose, and kneeled before her.

"Heaven bless my dear child," said the Countess, stifling her emotion.

Elinor then returned to Rosa.

"How governess Harley loved to hear you sing that song, Rosa."

"And she loved to hear *you* sing it too, Elinor."

"Poor governess Harley! she is dead I think?"

"No, my dear, only a little indisposed."

"Ah that Penry; once I loved Penry; did not you, Rosa?—but every body is either ill or lost there."

"No, my dear Elinor, you wrong poor Penry, all our friends there are well."

"All,

"All, Rosa?—not *all*."

"All I recollect; Sir Solomon Mushroom I saw yesterday; his daughter—"

"Do you call them friends, Rosa?"

"Then Doctor Croak and Mrs. Bawsky—I have seen them too; they are in the house where you left them. And your Rosa, you see, is neither ill nor lost. As to the doctor's son——"

Elinor trembled.

"He," joined the Duke "is returned to his father."

"Our father which art in heaven," whispered Elinor, still trembling.

"No, my dearest Elinor, be assured he is not with his heavenly father."

"Upon your honour, Rosa, is he not killed?"

"Oh no, my dear love," said Lady Denningcourt, "take it on *my* honour he is well and happy; you will not doubt *my* word."

"Oh no, madam, I dare not; and if you say he is well, and—but that cannot be; he cannot

cannot be happy, not quite happy, that I can't expect; but if he is not dead, not killed, not tied to the chariot wheels"—and she put her hand to her head.—“Oh how my temples beat—.”

“And so does mine, my dear; let us walk into the air.”

Elinor looked anxiously at Lady Denningcourt for permission.

“Wherever you please, my love; this charming young lady is your friend, your guest; you must do the honours of your house.”

“As I used to do at—at—”

“At Penry, or Walbrook;—and when you are weary of walking, you know you have a carriage:—be happy my Elinor, and you will make us all so.”

Elinor courtesied, and joining Rosa, they strolled round to the other front, and walked under shade of the oaks till the evening bell rung, when the two friends returned arm in arm.

From this day Elinor became every hour more rational; her intellects strengthened as her health improved; and as the power of recollection was sweetened by the most assidu-

ous

ous and tender friendship; as she was countenanced in the splendid style of living, so new and embarrassing, by the presence of that friend with whom she had lived in the truest affection and most unlimited confidence; by whom she was soothed, flattered, and encouraged into a sense of the respect due to her protectress, whether mother or aunt, as well as to the noble family whom she was led to consider as her own; and above all, as Lady Denningcourt assured her that young Croak had returned uninjured to his father, and that she would consider his establishment in life as her own particular concern, the mind of the poor girl became in a very few days so calm that the Duke looked forward with renovated hope to an event, which Miss Bruce still insisted never would, never could take place.

Rosa did not fail to avail herself of the Duke's permission to attend him at six in the library; where she pleased, gratified, and affected him, by a frank detail of all the leading events of her life, excepting only her attachment to Montreville.

The Duke, with that true dignity of soul which influenced all his actions, confessed himself humbled by her story; it proved, he said, that the offspring of a beggar, with a good natural understanding, and proper tuition, might soar as far out of the ken of her equals, as the child of a prince, less happy in either, might sink beneath hers.

He rejoiced that his nephew was neither the husband nor seducer of Kattie Buhanun. In the first instance, he could never have pardoned him for uniting himself honourably to a daughter of Castle Gowrand; in the last, the seduction of innocence was an act he never could have forgiven himself; so much, indeed, was it the wish of the family to see the heir apparent married, that he might have chosen the daughter of the poorest gentleman in Scotland without fear of offending them, provided only that gentleman was not a Buhanun.

He applauded Rosa for the interest she took in the fate of the unfortunate mistress at the castle, but objected to her ostensible interference; he would himself, he had the
goodness

goodness to say, get every necessary information concerning her; and before Betty came to summon her to Elinor, who was already inquiring for her Rosa, he appointed her to come to him at the same hour any morning she pleased, when he would make her acquainted with the sad events that consigned the grand daughter of a Duke of Athelane to the misfortune of imbibing the manners, sentiment and interest so uncongenial to her rank, as those of Doctor Croak.

Elinor was rational and collected; she wished Rosa to breakfast with her, and afterwards to walk as they had done the day before. They were seen from her window by the delighted mother, and instead of dropping a courtsey, immediately went to her chamber.

That she was received with transport, that every ray of returning reason was a fund of happiness to the family, cannot be doubted; neither, if Rosa's sole merit had been that of restoring the mental faculties of Lady Denningcourt's only child, need it be said her future life, in respect to an ample provision,

would have been perfectly easy; but her amiable disposition, pleasing manners and accomplishments endeared her so much, particularly to Lady Denningcourt, and such was the secret pleasure she took in tracing the likeness of her beloved Wallace, that, wishing to conceal an excess she could not repel, she restrained those caresses in company with which she loaded her in private.

The Duke had pressed his niece to visit Athelane, and Lady Hopely was equally urgent to obtain her company to Edinburgh;—the apology for declining both, Elinor's derangement, was now done away,—she was now convalescent; the objection therefore removed, and the doctor approving of change of scene, Lady Hopely earnestly renewed her invitation, and the Countess cheerfully accepted it.

One grand objection to the hurry Lady Hopely recommended, was the wedding at Delworth, where a perfect carnival was to be held for a week, and where all the genteel people within forty miles round were expected. Miss Angus had, she said, half,
and

and Miss Bruce quite ruined herself in dresses for the ball *al fresco*; and these dresses could be of no sort of use at the races, concerts, balls, or private parties. Lady Hopely was anxious to join at Edinburgh.

The Duke had the goodness to arrange the business to the satisfaction of all parties. "You cannot," said he, "go to these balls *al fresco* without protection; and as I see no young knight ready to fight enchanters for you, suppose you will take up with an old one."

"You are positively the most beautiful, Duke, in the world," cried Miss Bruce.

"Not," joined Miss Angus, "but what a younger beauty might have done as well."

"Saucy enough;—but as no younger offers, I am inclined to wait for you, and so meet the ladies at Athelane."

"But a fearful thought strikes me, uncle; though the cards are come, yet this wedding may not take place at the time, nor at all, and then we shall lose both the charming things, the races and the balls."

“For this I know no remedy but making a wedding and a ball *al fresco* of our own at Athelane, or two balls, and two weddings, if you can so contrive it; though, indeed, few of our own countrymen think better of a fine face for having grown stale in the south.”

“Stale, uncle!”

“Stale, Duke!”

“Oh, barbarous! we, however, accept your knightship.”

This being arranged, the two Countesses, Elinor, and to her infinite joy, Rosa, prepared for their speedy journey to Edinburgh, where she anticipated complete gratification.

She would once more embalm the memory of the Major with tears of grateful affection; once more visit the dear Burnside, with the latent, though faint hope that the loved inhabitant of that enchanting retreat might have been heard of by some body there; yes, and spite of her strong aversion to Mr. Simon Frazer, W.S. she would press the sweet Emma and Jessy to her heart;—then what pleasure to meet the
good,

good, the friendly Doctor Cameron! and how happy would Mrs. Steward be at the change in her fortune.

Although Lady Denningcourt directed the two friends to have their clothes made exactly alike, Elinor, perfectly indifferent to the profusion of ornaments prepared for herself, took infinite delight in affording every thing for Rosa, carefully imitating the precision and exactness of Lady Denningcourt's woman in arranging her dresses; and as she was happily busy, she was indulged even in placing them in the imperials.

But while the family at the Jointure-house were engaged—one part of it preparing for a journey, the other for a carnival—what are the beautiful Countess and her guests about at Delworth?

“ Signing and sealing’s no part of our bliss ;

“ We settle our hearts, and seal with a kiss.”

So says the old song, and it says well; but there were no such summary doings at Delworth.

That lawyers, who have deeds of importance in their hands to finish, chuse to listen with iron faces, to the anxiety of those who urge them to dispatch, those who have deeds, and employ lawyers, need not be told. Lady Gauntlet and, we must not doubt, Lord Delworth, were almost distracted at the snail's gallop of Mr. Josiah Turgid, the attorney of Sir Solomon Mushroom, and Mr. Lemuel Supple, the attorney of her ladyship.

No Miss in Great-Britain could be more ripe for a coronet than Miss Mushroom; no gentleman of a few years standing, more willing to pay a good price for the bauble than Sir Solomon her uncle; nor any family in the world more ready and willing to receive the purchase-money than the family of Earl Gauntlet; but still the tardy lawyers were not ready;—Mr. Supple, indeed, assured his noble clients, that he did his possible, but old Turgid was neither to be led nor driven.

Nothing ever was so teasing, cried Miss Mushroom; every thing was in waiting, even to the frames for the desert; every
body

body invited, the day set, and still no absolute certainty, although nothing, it was allowed, but these teasing lawyers, could delay the happiness of Lord Delworth and Miss Mushroom, and consequently that of their respective families.

In this train of fretful felicity were the family at Delworth, when the carriages of the two Countesses and their suite, passed the porter's lodge, in their way to Scotland.

Rosa, who, with Elinor and Betty, was in Lady Denningcourt's chaise, embraced her friend, and blessed the hour when she had passed those gates, since, through them, she had found her dear Elinor, and the happy asylum at the Jointure-House.

"It was a very round-about way to our ouse, though Miss," cried Betty; "but they say the nearer the church, the furdier from God; and the furdest way about, the nearest way home;—but for my part, I don't like no round-about to such devilditch places as Skutlun, for our stuart."—

"Pray, Betty, have you ever heard of your husband?"

“To be sure, Miss Elinor; Miss Rosy, I dare say, told you as he was comed home worse nor nothen, and got no more nor one leg, a poor ignoramus of a man—and here now he is off again.—I am sure what my sufferens have been, God he knows; howsever, one swallow don’t make a summer, so I shan’t fret no more about nothen.”

The road for some miles before Carlisle, confirmed Betty in her idea of Skotlun not having a bush or a bramble to dry clothes on; but Rosa felt an indescribable sensation of pleasure, when Lady Hopely’s carriage stopped, and she said, “we are in Scotland.” Ah, how different were now her feelings, and when last she passed the boundaries of the two kingdoms. It was just a year since, with a dejected mind, and disordered body, she left Scotland, with a sentiment of native regret; if the prospect before her was dreary, that she had then left was no less so; yet she feared the one, and regretted the other, and her heart sunk as if going from an old home:—now it was lifted up in thankful joy; now it greeted the grand and sublime before

before her with solemn pleasure, and she inhaled the pure air with ecstasy.

Lady Hopely had a fine house in Queen-Street; what a delightful view of land and sea did it command; even Elinor, though seldom affected by local objects, was struck; and Betty cried out, as she entered the hall, "Well, for my part! if our Stuart has ever been in Skotlun, he must be a monstercious tarrydiddle teller; is this the devilditch country where there is not a bramble nor a bush to dry clothes!" and when civilly accosted by a number of clean healthy servants, each equally anxious to assist and oblige her, "be these the proud upstart nothenites? why sure 'tis the garden of heden."

Lady Hopely was every where a gentleman; in her own house she was magnificent; there was an air of hospitable grandeur in every thing she said or did; which, though familiar to Lady Denningcourt, charmed both our young friends.

When they took possession of the apartments allotted them, Rosa ran delighted to the window;—there was the Calton on the

right, where she had wandered many hours and watered the green sward with her tears;—there were the blue range of distant highlands which over-hung the sweet vale of Castle-Gowrand;—there the wide expanse of waters, with the swelling white sail approaching the gradually narrowing Frith, on whose pellucid bosom the fortunes of many an industrious adventurer were borne:—the charming walk to the water of Leith;—the fields, the gardens, the castle—all, the eye took in all that had before charmed it; her heart recognized the very house on Leith walk, where goodness and humanity were enthroned in the heart of Mrs. Steward.

While these sensations of voluptuous delight passed in Rosa's mind, Elinor was busy in arranging her clothes, her writing and drawing apparatus, and even placing her dressing-case on the toilet. Betty, Lady Denningcourt's woman, any body, or nobody, might attend on Elinor; the matter was of no concern to her, all she was solicitous about, was herself to wait on Rosa;

and

and her spirits rose or fell as she was suffered to do it, without interruption.

“ You know, Rosa,” she would say, “ when we were at school, you never would play the maid, and I never would be the mistress; they were happy, happy times; suppose us at play now,—I could be content to play so my whole life.”

The ladies who were on habits of friendship with Lady Hopely, waited for no cold cards of invitation; it was the friend they loved, not the lady they visited, which brought them in crowds to her house; no affected state, in ceremony's ungracious garb, returned them from the door. Lady Hopely is arrived, circulated through Edinburgh; the knocker was not a moment quiet; every body called, and every body were admitted; even after she sat down to dinner, and the table was crowded to the corners, she could chat, laugh, and welcome her friends.

Lady Denningcourt's spirits were too languid to bear a scene of such agreeable bustle the whole evening; but as Lady Mary, Lady Betty,

Betty, and Lady Susan Hopely who with their good and amiable father had taken the direct road through Newcastle, when Lady Hopely went with her friend to Denning-court, and had gone to a seat of the Earl's, twenty miles from Edinburgh, and not expecting her so early, were not yet arrived, the Countess insisted the lasses, as she called Elinor and Rosa, should assist her in entertaining her friends, and receive her daughters who arrived before supper.

The Earl of Hopely was what includes every virtue, and every accomplishment—a perfect *gentleman*; and if a cynic could discover any thing to alter in Lady Hopely, it would be in her husband's presence, since it was Lady, not Lord Hopely, who was every thing to every body.

The young ladies were lively, agreeable women, who, without any pretensions to beauty, were more attractive than many first rate toasts.

The two strangers were great objects of curiosity to the company; Lady Denning-court's story which had been long consigned to

to oblivion, revived, with the acknowledgment of her daughter; "She was a pretty enough girl;" but Miss Walsingham was an angel.

Rosa's natural turn was a chaste vivacity;—although she had, since the Major's death, contracted a habit of gravity and reflection, the natural consequence of the uncertainty and dependance of her situation:—these were now, however, changed to the most happy confidence. The Duke, who admired the saying of Cæsar, "If I am to die to day, that is what I am to do to day," more than all his conquests, had desired her to meet him in the library the morning they left Denningcourt, when he had shewn her a codicil to his will, executed in proper form, in her favour, though he had not yet made the promised communications of the misfortunes of the Athelane family.

In the possession of such manifold, and unexpected happiness, her friend sitting placidly smiling by her side, could Rosa fail to be in spirits, when a crowded assembly of young people seemed only emulous to add to
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the pleasure of each other, whose judgment of her was unanimous: Miss Walsingham was the most beautiful, the most elegant, the most charming, the most accomplished, the most sensible, the most every thing, woman could be; not a creature would have believed, had it been declared from the pulpit of the Trong church, that the poor beggarly thing, whom the naughty Major Buhanun had imposed on his wife, as a relation of his family, and the divine Miss Walsingham, was one and the same person.

After supper, Rosa and Elinor stole up to Lady Denningcourt's apartment; she was fatigued with her journey, and gone to rest; she nevertheless spoke to them; "My country ladies," said she, "knows not what it is to be weary; Lady Hopely will not think of retiring; you are not yet Scotch lasses, therefore don't sacrifice health to any thing."

"If not to be weary will make me a Scotch lass," replied Rosa, "I am already one.—Lady Hopely and her daughters are all life, and the company is delightful."

"Don't,

“Don’t, however, let it delight you too much,” said she, and after kissing them both, calling them her dear children, she dismissed them.

When they left the apartment, Elinor, throwing her arms round Rosa’s neck, after extorting from her a promise to do what she desired, chose herself to retire to rest, but insisted Rosa should return to the company.

Not the smallest trait of her late indisposition remained about Elinor, except when any thing she set her heart on, was opposed. Rosa had observed this, and always cheerfully complied with all her little whims; she therefore rung for Betty, and returned to Lady Hope-ly, as she desired; and danced reels, or played on a piano-forte, for others to dance in turn, till midnight, when the company, after fixing innumerable parties for the ensuing week, separated, in the highest spirits and good humour.

Rosa’s dreams no longer placed her on precipices, trembling at the abyss beneath; no longer tumbled her headlong into dark pits, or left her wandering in the mud without shoe

or

or stocking; her eyes closed but to see visions more pleasing than even reality; Doctor Cameron enfolding her in the strong arm of disinterested friendship; Emma and Jeffy Buhanun hanging round her neck; the Burn-side exactly as she remembered it, with Mrs. Walsingham, the Major, and even her long lamented Colonel Buhanun, grouped together there;—then again, the Gauntlet family and connections without a Mrs. Woudbe—the Countess and her children grouped with Montreville and his friends,—herself equally carested by both.

After such dreams, could Rosa rise with less beauty and less animation, than she went to rest; rest indeed, she had so completely enjoyed, that she rose at six, with all her animal spirits in the fullest float of exhilaration.

Elinor's dreams were less pleasant, or her animal spirits, perhaps, not so soon restored. Only one or two servants were yet stirring. Rosa opened the sash of her dressing-room. The objects she greeted with so much pleasure on her entrance, met her eye; she
snatched

snatched her hat, and without a servant, darted, light as a sylph, to Leith walk.

"My Maistress es nae gootten oop, Mefs," cried a damsel, who answered when she rung at Mr. Steward's door.

"Where are the children?" replied Rosa, walking in; "tell Mrs. Steward an old friend——"

"It is Miss Buhanun's voice," cried Mrs. Steward, starting up.

"You are dreaming, woman," answered her husband.

"I will trust my recollection;—her's is a true Scotch voice; there is harmony in her monosyllables;" and Mrs. Steward run half-dressed into her sitting room, where she found it was indeed Miss Buhanun; no longer the harrassed unprotected being she remembered her, but the elegant, easy, fashionable looking gentlewoman.

The endearments of grateful regard on one side, and of warm feeling on the other, having subsided; and Mr. Steward, who, after having been disturbed by his wife's dream had turned and fallen asleep again, enquired

enquired after, Mrs. Steward would not have been surprised, she said, to find Rosa entirely under the protection of Lady Hopely ; as, notwithstanding the torrents of scandal which were every where propagated against her, after her departure from Edinburgh, the Countess had continued a staunch and firm advocate ; but the house of Athelane, with fewer claims on its fortune and affections, with all the known dignity of inborn sentiment, princely extraction, high rank and splendid fortunes, were, in point of honour and patronage, the first in the kingdom ; and it was from Mrs. Steward our heroine now heard the particulars of the story so often promised by Major Buhanun, and once begun by the Duke of Athelane.

Mrs. Steward did not remember Wallace Buhanun herself ; but her father, who, like the major, described him as the flower of his clan, handsome, courageous, honourable and just, taught her early to weep over his disastrous story. The clan of Athelane imprecated the presumption of young Wallace ;—the clan of Buhanun, insisting the blood of
their

their chief was equally noble, although their fortune were sunk, abhorred the local pride of the young Dungaron, and were far from regretting that he fell by the hand of the youth he had insulted.

The inveteracy on either side was far from being appeased, and had the talk of marriage of Mr. Angus the heir of the Athelanes, with the eldest daughter of the heir of Buhanun, taken place, though that event might have appeased one side, it would have irritated the other; well indeed it was that Mr. Angus, by returning to Edinburgh, and being constantly seen there the last autumn, winter and spring, had done away the general suspicion that he was Katie's seducer, since some of the family still remained, who, though they might not have felt themselves particularly implicated in her disgrace from any other quarter, would have thought themselves bound to revenge it on him.

Rosa had now the key to all Lady Denningcourt's conduct; that a child, the offspring of the unfortunate pair, had been born, concealed by the late Duke, and now acknowledged

ledged by the surviving parent, was first whispered, then openly confirmed all over Scotland, and the intention of the Duke was also suspected; this child was an interesting object to all the relations of the late Colonel, and Mrs. Steward asked a volume of questions about her.

Rosa gratified not only her curiosity, but her clannish pride, by delineating Elinor with the warm colourings of friendship;—after which she had also her questions to ask. Mr. Frazer had been as unfortunate in all his undertakings, since his marriage with the widow Buhanun, as his most implacable enemy could wish.—The widow was more deeply embarrassed than even he could have suspected, and he had not time to determine what to do with himself and her, before Lord Aron Horse-magog was very sorry to inconvenience Mr. Frazer, but he wanted to *lock up* his apartments, and Mr. Simon Frazer, W. S. had a score of obligations served on him by other W. S's. to give bail he would not leave Scotland.

Mr. Simon Frazer intended no such thing, if he could possibly help it; so convening the

creditors

creditors of the charming widow together, he assigned all her income for the payment of the debts, excepting only the house and lands of Castle Gowrand, where he made his wife so great an œconomist, as to keep the family on the milk, poultry, mutton and corn the farm afforded, and allotted the money allowed for the children's board and education, one half for purchase of such necessaries as were absolutely needful, and the other to make a fund for his own private use, in case he should have the misfortune to lose his wife, whose comforts indeed were not of a complexion to insure longevity.

Rosa could not help feeling exceedingly distressed at this account of the situation of her friend's family; the children she considered as losing all the accomplishments she had been so anxious to give them, and their mother actually sinking under the accumulated evils of remorse, mortified vanity and hard living.—She communicated to Mrs. Steward the information she supposed Doctor Cameron must by this time have received from John Brown, and expressed her hope Mrs.

Frazer's

Frazer's life might be rendered more comfortable, from the considerable acquisition of wealth in her family.

Mrs. Steward had heard nothing of this, yet she had seen Doctor Cameron very lately, "and I need not," she added, "I suppose swear to you that we have but one subject of conversation when we meet."

Rosa paused—the Duke's information was, that John did not return to the castle from Lady Denningcourt; she therefore concluded he was gone to Edinburgh, and could not yet persuade herself he would neglect a business of such importance, whatever reason the doctor might have for concealing it from Mrs. Steward. After two hours delightful interchange of professions of regard, Rosa returned to Queen-street, where she found none of the family, except Lady Denningcourt, had yet left their beds.

As in the regular routine of living at Denningcourt, as well as during the journey, Rosa's attention was almost exclusively paid to Elinor, it was from the Duke of Athelane Lady Denningcourt had heard the general anecdotes

anecdotes of her life ; and when she saw her enter her apartment with the bloom of health on her cheek, and triumph of sensibility in her eyes, she concluded that her early visit had been paid to a former friend, and congratulated her on the satisfaction visible in her countenance.

Rosa had no natural reserve about her ; if she had concealments, they were the effect of some unpleasant or local circumstances ; but there was nothing to prevent her expressing to one, whose affectionate partiality increased every moment,—her wish to pay a visit to Mrs. Frazer and her family, and once more to behold the scene of former tranquil pleasure on the Burn side.—So far from opposing a desire so natural and laudable, Lady Denningcourt declared she envied the gratifications she would receive :—“ Ah ! Miss Walsingham,” she added, “ there is a glen, a burn, a retreat, what would I not give to visit them with the delight you are about to feel ; it is true you have lost one loved companion by death, another by change of circumstance ; desolation has also visited it ; but you are not

the innocent cause of all. Go, my charming young friend, enjoy the first blessing of benevolence; visit the poor trifling victim to vanity,—make her and her children little presents; leave an opening to the mercenary husband to suppose that your visits or at least your presents will be repeated; you will by that means insure them some few indulgences; you will find a fund sufficient for all in this pocket book,—but you are not to thank me—you are my deputy in this business. You know I appropriate a certain sum to acts of benevolence; perhaps you would doubt, if I did not vouch the fact, my fund exceeds the demands in the neighbourhood where an honourable regard to my word has cast my lot;—I came therefore to my own native land, the no less dear than fatal scene of woes that still rive my aching heart, provided to deserve the blessings of the poor;—not—mark Rosa, and do not feel what I can never mean, a reflection on you,—not the hardy beggar whose clamours wound the ear in the streets; not such as her who could abandon you;—these are
not

not *my* poor; but the industrious unsuccessful artisan; the fond mother who can brave famine herself if her young ones be fed; the deserted orphan; the objects reduced with virtuous unsubdued pride from affluence to need, who search even in the looks of old connection for the slight from which sensibility recoils; yes, Rosa, yes, and her too whose ingenuous confidence, or even whose thoughtless vanity, like your Kattie, has brought to shame,—and even those who, like her more blameable mother, feel the “anguish of a too late gratitude,” who literally swallow ashes and drink tears, in contrasting present misery with former happiness,

“And grieve they have prized them no more.”

These are my poor, and that was your song; you had nothing more novel and fashionable,—but Shenstone’s sonnets must always be felt—and there is an uneducated man in this country whose soul is Shenstonian, though his poetry do not strike so much, because it is not so polished; but the Scotch plough-boy will delight you when you read

him in the woods of Athelane, with a Scotch glossary by you, without which you cannot understand half his beauties.—Am I not garrulous this morning?—I think am; my heart, my dear child, expands when I look at you, and when I remember what a blessing you have restored to me.—Oh Miss Walsingham! you must know the weight of my self-reproach, the anguish,—but, praise heaven, you *never can* know it.”

Rosa sat by the amiable speaker, attentive and affected; she kissed her hand, and her heart at least took the position in which she was more than once ready to place her person,—it was prostrate before her.

“Use the notes as I recommend, except you have any private objections,” continued the Lady; “and as the races commence in two days, when every other amusement will also commence, take your friend Mrs. Steward with you, and go to Castle Gowrand in a plain carriage,—little minds are affected more with appearance than reality,—if you visit that poor woman in the state for which perhaps she pines, she will envy your lot
and

and lament her own, without once recollecting there is such a thing as merit in the affair."

"Oh madam! how good, how considerate are you to every body."

"If you saw me in possession of such blessings and such power as I do possess, would you not despise me if I thought only for myself? come, you are not good at compliments; if you mean really to flatter me, just say, and let it be truth, I have made you happy."

Rosa had no longer power to repel the impulse of more than respect and affection; she was on her knees, her white arms clasped round the Countess's waist, her fine eyes cast upwards to her face meeting her tender and agitated glances, and both in tears, when Elinor entered and knelt before her.

"My child, my best girls!" sobbed the Countess, "you must leave me; I am not well,—I want air; ring for Willis, and leave me; I cannot join you at breakfast."

Rosa flew to the bell, and Elinor, with a face of wonder and concern at the repeated

request of the Countess, left the room with Rosa.

Lady Hopely and her charming daughters were by this time assembled;—the young ladies had invitations and parties for the next week, which might take up at least six months at a moderate calculation:—Happy in their parents, their friends, and themselves, the breakfast table was a scene of absolute confusion; they were all laughers, singers and talkers,—and it was scarce removed before the house was again thronged with visitors.

Rosa and Elinor retired to dress, and before the business of the toilet was dispatched, a note was sent to Dr. Cameron with Miss Walsingham's request to see him as soon as convenient.

An English beauty in Edinburgh, need only be seen to be generally talked of; Doctor Cameron, indeed, did not talk; and he was a hearer, though not a partaker, of the raptures the fair stranger inspired.

“Miss Walsingham!” said he—“I have certainly heard that name; the young lady is perhaps ill after her long journey.”

The

The carriage was at the door,—he was going his rounds, and marked Queen-street on his memorandum card.

Rosa was still in her dressing room, the drawing room thronged with company, when Doctor Cameron was announced;—he was down in a moment.

The Doctor was gravely following a servant into the drawing-room, when Rosa threw herself into his arms, even before he had time to see it was the form he most admired on earth.—The Doctor's eyes twinkled, his lips quivered, he turned pale, then red,—and at last uttered, "Miss Buhannun!"

It prudently struck the servant, who was shewing the Doctor up, that a meeting so interesting required no witnesses; and he threw the door of an empty apartment open.

"Dear Doctor Cameron!"

"Dear, and ever dear Rosa Buhannun!" with "how are you?—where did you come from?—what a dear unexpected pleasure!" and the long etcæteras of joyful exclamations between dear and long parted friends, at a sudden meeting, being repeated over and

over, Rosa was astonished to find John Brown had never made his appearance in, "Auld Reikie," and the Doctor was much, and more agreeably surprized to hear the motive for his being sent thither. A repetition of particulars, before heard from Mrs. Steward, respecting the Frazers, and those Rosa had related to her respecting herself followed.

The Doctor could neither contain, nor express his joy, when he found she was settled in the bosom of that family he had so ardently wished to see her at the head of, although he made so dear a sacrifice for that end; he confirmed the assertion of Lord Lowder's gentleman, relative to his following her to London, where he had the mortification to find, that the one passenger who alighted from the stage which carried Rosa from Edinburgh, was the house maid of a northern Baronet, who got into it near Durham; and certainly, notwithstanding the zeal and fervent desire both of the Doctor and Mr. Angus, whom he did not just now mention to Rosa, was his companion in the enquiries after her, in and about London, love and friendship, aided by
the

the hundred eyes of Argus, must have given up the chase, as it was literally impossible to find a person in London who was at the same time so busy in Yorkshire.

Rosa mentioned her intention of visiting Castle Gowrand, and once more seeing the Burn side, where she declared, if ever she were rich, she would erect an obelisk in memory of the happy hours she had past there.

The Doctor, smiling, told her, she might if she pleased be rich enough to do that or any thing else; but he had much to say to her of very serious import; and though it was at this time inconvenient for him to leave Edinburgh only for two days, he would have the pleasure to escort her and Mrs. Steward in his own carriage, with post horses, to Castle Gowrand; and he added, "Do not look so grave, for I am not going to make love to you, at least on my own behalf."

This assurance was really a relief to Rosa; she respected and loved the Doctor as a friend, and the most worthy of men, but her heart was not in a disposition to admit sentiments of a more tender nature,—no

not if an Adonis had addressed her.—She accepted his offer with a frank good humoured smile, and as he was so kind as to take on himself the arrangements with Mrs. Steward, promised to be ready by five the next morning.

Lady Hopely rallied both the Doctor and Rosa on their private interview; and Elinor innocently asked if that was really her lover, and if she thought he was to be at all compared to poor Croak.

The Ladies Denningcourt and Hopely proposed riding in the evening, while the young party walked; but Elinor, who never could divest herself of a strong degree of *mauvaise honte*, wished to accompany them; then, Lady Mary protested, Susan should not be her companion, for she would have Miss Walsingham with her.

“Rosa loves walking,” replied Elinor, “better than riding, and so perhaps does Lady Susan; now as I *must* go out some where, I prefer riding.”

“Must, child,” cried Lady Mary, “there is no must in any thing of the sort; you may
stay

stay at home and read the bible if you please, or what is as well perhaps, look down on us in the promenade ;—you permit Miss Athelane to do either, I hope, Lady Denningcourt ?”

“ No Lady Mary,” replied the Countess, coldly, and a little piqued at a certain contempt of Elinor’s understanding, which she thought she perceived, “ I have every disposition to oblige my daughter, but I like her company, and cannot dispense with it.”

Lady Susan then begged also to ride ; and the Ladies Mary and Betty Hopely with Rosa walking between them, drew all the Edinburgh smarts after them in the promenade, while Lady Denningcourt took the opportunity of the ride to reconcile Elinor to the parting, for two days, from Rosa, which with no small difficulty she effected ; and at five the next morning Rosa stepped into the same carriage which brought her from Castle Gowrand to Edinburgh, when she was received by Mrs. Steward and her friend the Doctor, and set off for Castle Gowrand.

CHAP. V.

A short Chapter; containing a Proposal of Marriage, a Memento Mori, and an unexpected Meeting.

DOCTOR Cameron's regard for Rosa was as warm and as generous as ever; he had, he told her, much to say, and Mrs. Steward's presence was no restraint either on him or our heroine.

After adverting to his fruitless excursion to London, he surprised her no less by naming his companion than explaining the motives of the journey.

It was not merely Rosa's confidence and esteem, but her admiration, which were riveted

ted by the Doctor's manner; he had left his home, risked his practice, and, in some degree, his character; he had sacrificed the first and dearest wish of his soul; and, by a refined and delicate exertion of generosity, changed the fond desire of making her his own, to the more noble hope of seeing her beauty and virtue adorn a rank congenial to her high deserts; yet the reluctant sigh burst from his bosom, a drop of anguish stood on his cheek, while a flow of sensibility conquered his natural taciturnity; and though he pleaded against his own fond bias in favour of a rival, he enumerated with energy the many advantages that awaited her acceptance of Mr. Angus, whose passion he declared, was so far from abating in fervor or sincerity, that all his hope of happiness depended on possessing her; to rank, affluence, and the power to do universal good, he added the person, accomplishments, and disinterested passion of one of the finest gentlemen of the age: the family, rich and liberal in all its principal branches, fondly devoted to this their last and only heir, and
ready

ready to receive to their hearts whatever contributed to his felicity; he besought her to consider, that, in accepting the offer of his friend, she had no narrow prejudices to combat, no favour to solicit, no explanations to make—Mr. Angus loved her for herself; his own fine sense and taste were the best earnest of the value he would set on hers. “Observe,” he continued, “the noble confidence of this gentleman; he knows you are dear to me—not perhaps how dear, for that is past comprehension—yet he commits to me the interest of his soul. You know his sister;—all his female, as well as male, relations are amiable; you were formed for them, and they for you; your heart is free—I must hope it is. Dearest Rosa, (and the good man’s face lighted up with the heroism of his own conduct) make me happy—say you will be propitious to my friend.

Rosa had assured Doctor Cameron fifteen months since her heart was free; but what revolutions have not taken place in female hearts in a less number of minutes? It is true, Montreville was unworthy; he no longer occupied

occupied every moment she could detach from the world, nor was she any longer anxious to prove him, by comparison, superior to all his sex; and, on the contrary, Mr. Angus's character, though sketched by a friend, could not be too high coloured. She had heard innumerable instances of his goodness of heart and generosity of sentiment since she had resided in the family, and knew how important to them all his happiness and establishment; but she was still conscious of a feeling for the unworthy Montreville, inimical to an attachment to any other man; and therefore the more amiable Mr. Angus, and the more honourable his offered alliance, the more she was bound to decline a heart for which she could not exchange her own.

Doctor Cameron waited her answer with beating heart, quivering lip, and averted eye; he trembled at the gentle hem! which preceded her reply, and involuntarily relinquished the loved hand, which, in the open confidence of friendship, he had been permitted to retain, while, with feelings not easy

to define, he heard her firmly declare her high sense of the honour Mr. Angus offered, and the utter impossibility of her accepting it.

The task of honour and friendship were performed; he had pleaded for another with more zeal than he could do for himself; well, she declined disposing of that hand, that heart, dearer to him in that moment than ever, and might he not indulge the secret pleasure of reflecting he was still free to love, to adore her.

Yet could he thus give up the interest he had adopted?—the hope of seeing the idol of his soul as superior in rank as in beauty?—no, Doctor Cameron still loved; but his was the love of urbanity, of honour, and of sentiment: his she would not be; and was she not in a world where the protection of beauty is the destruction of virtue, where the Gauntlets, the Woudbes the Lowders, were ready to elbow the few Rosas sprinkled up and down the earth out of existence, oh! why then, blind equally to interest and danger, would

would she reject a good so certain and unequivocal.

Thus in effect reasoned Doctor Cameron during a six hours ride with Rosa, whose adherence to her first declaration might surprise, might hurt him; but he was ready to devour the hand she replaced in his when, with an air and voice that made him giddy, she calmly said, "After having told you, my dear friend, my heart cannot be a party in this treaty, what would you think of your grateful Rosa if she gave up that to rank, riches, splendour, or interest, which she had before refused to intrinsic merit and modest worth like yours?"

The Doctor could not speak, neither could he trust his eyes; had there been a possibility of kneeling with three people in a small chaise, that he would certainly have done; as it was, he had nothing for it but thrusting his head out of the window, and meditating on the wonders of a narrow lane; after which, till the chaise stopped at the gate of Castle Gowrand, the ladies had the chat
all

all to themselves, for the Doctor observed a profound silence.

The Doctor's servant rang the bell, as servants, who think much of the consequence of their master, and more of their own, generally do—loud and long; and no answer being returned, he repeated his ring till the wire, which was rusty for want of use, broke, when the Doctor alighted, and with some difficulty pushed open the gates. The chaise then drove up to the door; but was this Castle Gowrand! was this the court yard, now overgrown with long grass, where the wheels of gay equipages once rolled incessantly! were these green slippery steps the snow-white entrance to the light-some, though ancient hall! Heavens! the windows, once clear as the mountain spring, hung with drapery curtains, shaded by venetian blinds, and ornamented with birds and flowers, are all now close shut up!

Rosa turned pale, and Mrs. Steward red: the former thought some calamity had visited poor Mrs. Frazer or her children—perhaps

haps both; the latter, that Frazer had cheated every body, and run away.

The Doctor had in the mean while entered by the back door into the house, but no answer being returned to his loud knock and call, he found his way to the front door; and having unbolted, unbarred, and unlocked it, encouraged the ladies to enter, as it was plain there were inhabitants belonging to the house, for a pot was over the kitchen fire with barley broth, and a lean cat lay on the hearth.

Rosa, who well knew every part of the house, opened one door after another; the furniture were all in their places, but evidently out of use, except one small parlour, and two bed-chambers; and in one of the latter, to her infinite joy, hung two robes she had made for Emma and Jeffy.

As this proved that the family still resided there, the Doctor, recollecting that Mr. Frazer farmed the land, thought it very possible his wife and her daughters were helping to get in the harvest.

Rosa started. "What do you say, Doctor? the relic of Major Buhanun!"

It

It was Frazer's wife he spoke of.

"His children, then?"

The Doctor's lip quivered. "If Miss Buhanun wished to visit the Burn side, the afternoon was fine—and (he added, firmly) we shall see the children of our deceased friend at our return."

"I promised myself a melancholy pleasure in this excursion," said Rosa;—"melancholy I do indeed feel it; and, God knows, what portion of pleasure it will afford!"

They proceeded towards the Burn side—every step renewing some scene of past pleasure or pain;—how often, hanging on the Major's arm, as she now did on the Doctor's, delighting and delighted, the lovely girls running now before and now behind, too volatile for a regular pace, had she passed these fields. There was the widow Jonston's wee hoose, where poor Janet Ferguson died, lamenting her "pure Donald," her "bonnie child;" and here the craggy path through the glen, now bordered with primrose and wild strawberries, which she had last passed with beating heart; every
step

step impeded by relics of the fatal storm that desolated the Burn side. This was the point which, when first turned, astonished and delighted her, when last—oh! how sad, how bitter the contrast!—and now—”

“Eh Lorde!” cried Mrs. Steward, “what a heap of people by the side of yon Burn!”

“There’s Frazer and his wife,” said the Doctor, “and my two wards.”

“And who are those nearer the glen?” asked Mrs. Steward.

“No matter,” cried Rosa, her heart bounding as she quickened her pace round the corner.

The walks were clean; and though not bordered with exotics, the air was scented by the native flowers.

“This Mr. Frazer has some taste,” cried Rosa; “but what (starting back) is this?”

The Doctor was already trying to guess.

At the exact place where the wicket which led to the wee hoose formerly stood, was a black

black marble pedestal, with a square tablet on the top, on which was engraved,

DONALD FERGUSON,

the honest owner and inhabitant

of this humble spot,

was,

by the providence

of God,

translated from his happy dwelling

on the Burn side

into the presence

of Him

to whom only his integrity

was known.

Peace to the memory of a man of worth.

"Oh, Doctor! this must be you."

"I should have been too proud to conceal it."

"Has Frazer, then, after all, a soul?"

"We shall know presently. There his body stands, so intent on something in the angle of the glen, he does not observe us."

Rosa dropped a tear on the tablet, and proceeded down the winding path, which concealed

concealed the Burn a few paces from their view; but when again, by a sudden turn, they came near, surprise stopped both the Doctor and Rosa, while Mrs. Steward exclaimed, "Eh! what is that?"

In the midst of clusters of trees, which formerly sheltered the cold bath, a white marble obelisk was seen; the top of which rose to a spire through the foliage.

"Here," said the Doctor, "is the emanation of another soul, but it cannot be Frazer's."

Rosa eagerly advanced. A double row of weeping willows, interspersed with laurels of infantile growth, were planted round the front next the Burn; the back was inclosed by the rock, and tall trees grew close on each side.

The Doctor perceived the shade of a female figure, and drew back.

Rosa had not observed any thing but the extraordinary object she was bent on viewing nearer, and entered the inclosure.

The base of the obelisk was square, and, like the top, white marble; and as she perceived

ceived engravings on all sides, she drew quite close, putting back some of the foliage to give light. On a scroll, running up the marble, was—

Plant the high column o'er the vacant grave,
An hero's honour let an hero have,

On the flat in front—

Sacred to the memory
of
MAJOR BUHANUN :
the early part of whose life
was devoted to the service of his
King,
and the defence of his
Country ;
and
the latter
to
the honour of his
Maker :

On one side—

To him
who lived and died in the practice of
doing justice,
loving virtue,
and
walking humbly before
GOD.

On the other side—

Before

Before she could read the other side, a deep sigh, sounding from behind, startled her; a voice, evidently suppressed by tears, uttered a few inarticulate words—"Best of men! this last tribute"—was all she could understand. A tall elegant figure rose from her knees, slowly advanced, and passed her; she was dressed in a grey silk robe, a white beaver hat, and a deep black laced veil. Rosa felt an hysterical affection rising in her throat; she followed the female figure, who, supposing it was Mrs. Frazer or one of her daughters that had intruded on her privacy, threw back her veil, and turning round with an air of displeasure, beheld the almost fainting Rosa; who, the moment the veil was raised, darted forward, shrieking "Mrs. Walsingham! oh, ever beloved and respected, is it you?"

If, instead of Mrs. Walsingham herself, it had been her ghost, or the Major's ghost, or Donald's ghost, or all their ghosts together, the author flatters herself she could, with a little of her own, and a great deal of other people's fancy, have worked up a scene in-

tolerably terribly terrific;—but as it really was a corporeal substance, though animated by the essence of purity; as it was the meeting of two women of congenial spirits, after a long and painful separation, whose attachment to each other was the attraction of similar virtues, whose affection was founded on honour, and cemented by sensibility, those who could feel the transports of such a meeting themselves, will conceive more than the author can write; those who could *not*, will readily pass on to the next chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Shewing how a handsome Widow may change for the worse; how a young Lady may change her mind; and how the Mystery of the Back Stairs was discovered.

MRS. Walsingham's promised letter to Major Buhanun, coming to Mrs. Frazer's hands, some time after her second marriage, was too flagrant an exposure of her unjust folly, to be answered.

The Major's death, of which, with the family anecdotes Mrs. Walsingham heard from a person who went expressly to Scotland for the purpose of inquiring for Rosa, was a blow on her heart, against which Chris-

tian fortitude could, in the instant, do nothing; and her regret was the more poignant, as every instance of his undeviating honour and friendship, which recurred to her recollection, were embittered by the certainty, that grief for her supposed death, had accelerated his own; and though the impossibility of then tracing Rosa and the imprudence of Kattie, would at any other time have given her a sensible affliction, they were at this moment only subordinate evils; her health became affected, and she was in a low nervous feverish habit, when letters from Lisbon, in answer to those announcing her existence, implored her to take the very voyage her physicians prescribed, and visit the superior of the order of mercy; the same letters stated, that Don Joseph Tavora Alvarez had just lived long enough, after receiving her letter, to leave her the accumulations of her grandfather's fortune from the time of his death and all his personals; the estate, as well as his own, he bequeathed to her son—and as Lady Aurelia most anxiously desired to see her, Magdalena was accompanied on

the voyage by her father's friend, Captain Seagrove, leaving every necessary document to prove her marriage, with her son, whose presence was thought necessary in London.

The winter at Lisbon re-established her health; put her in possession of immense wealth, and meliorated her excessive sorrow for her friend.

She arrived in London at the period when the Chancellor referred the proof of her son's legitimacy to the inferior courts, and therefore could not immediately indulge herself in two things, on which her heart was set; the one was, to visit the Burn side—the other, to trace Rosa, if possible, from Edinburgh to wherever she might now be. But though she was obliged to defer seeing the spot, where so many solitary hours had been sweetened by the intercourse of friendship, the romantic turn she had acquired there, was not extinct.

She remembered the address of the artisan, who, under promise of secrecy, made the additions to the Wee Hoofe, so exactly correspondent in the external appearance to the

one inhabited by the progenitors of Donald Ferguson, and wrote to him, inclosing a drawing of certain mementos she wished erected by the Burn side; with another drawing as acceptable, and better understood, from Abraham Newland, to pay for materials and workmanship, promising a handsome reward, over and above the charge, if, when the summer was farther advanced, she found her orders well executed.

The man set about the business, with the alacrity such a promise might be expected to inspire; but as he was not now enjoined secrecy, Mr. Frazer soon heard of it.

"This mistress of your late husband," said he to his wife, "is a great fool, but she is rich, and is coming into this country."

"I don't wish to see or hear of her," replied Mrs. Frazer.

"As you please; but this house is *mine*, and here she *must* be *invited*."

No man in Scotland could more successfully enforce the *must* than Mr. ^{Sandy} Simon Frazer, W.S. and accordingly having had the works, which the inundation had half destroyed, cleaned,

cleaned, and put in order, he set a boy to watch the Burn side, and give him notice of the arrival of the stranger.

"But I don't know this lady," said Mrs. Frazer, peevishly, "and it can answer no good—."

"It is always good," replied her husband, "to be in the way of the loaves and fishes."

But besides not being known to the lady, Mrs. Frazer had many other reasons for avoiding what the *must* of her spouse enjoined.

Deprived of the power to receive, or pay visits; and no longer the admired leader of fashions, she was become careless, both in person and dress; she who was never useful, was now flatteringly indolent.

She was allowed one female domestic drudge; her daughters took care of her chamber, and their own; and all the apartments, not occupied in this miserable arrangement, were kept shut up.

She had no taste for reading; nobody to write to, and hated needle-work; helpless in herself, and insipid to others, there was no

break on the fameness of her existence, but what added to its wretchedness.

She recalled, with anguish, the tender delicate treatment of her former husband before she offended him, and his steady manly conduct afterwards; she could neither silence the reproaches of her own heart for her provoking and ungrateful conduct, nor help enumerating the many instances of his gentle manly forbearance; but repentance was too late—

“ ——— E'er folly could subside,

“ Or love return, the great Erasmus died.”

The moments she passed in vain sorrow, kneeling before her lost husband's picture, calling on his name, and embracing her children, though accompanied with tears, were the most pleasing of her comfortless life; the rest were a continued scene of wrangling and recriminations, too loud and violent to be checked by good manners, and often terminating with blows, on the part of the brutal husband, and real indisposition on that of the

the

the miserable wife, whose children shared the affliction of their mother.

Emma was of an age to feel and deplore the dismal revolution in her father's family; her mind, which, under the example of a companion she loved, had begun to exhibit traits of female perfection, torn with grief and shame for the imprudence of her beloved mother and sister, and deprived of the elegant resources in which she had hoped to excel, preyed on itself; and her delicate form exhibited the usual melancholy prospect of her premature decay, which her mother trembled to note.

Jessy, the lively little romp, whose beautiful face, though exposed to all weathers, was adorned with a thousand native graces, was Mrs. Frazer's only comfort;—she combed her hair, smoothed her laces, locked the tea chest, and when out of sight of the neighbours, sacrificed her shoon and stockings to please Mr. Frazer.

With the most grievous sense of this mortifying change of circumstances, no temptation of loaves, or fishes, nor even the definitive *must*, could reconcile Mrs. Frazer to

the idea of receiving her late husband's friend at Castle Gowrand; nor had she taken one preparatory step for that purpose, when Mr. Frazer hastily informed her, "that as the lady was arrived in a fine carriage, which stood at the brig end, she *must* go down to the Burn side to meet her."

Perhaps, had not Emma's respiration become more quick with joy, had not Jessy scampered away for her shoon and stockings, making the roof ring with, "And are ye sure the news is true?" Mrs. Frazer would have resisted the *must*, even at the peril of a few blows; but her children's comforts were so unmercifully curtailed, she had not the heart to disappoint them.

The one lass and boy, who had the honour to be Mr. Frazer's domestics, understood some strange sight was at the Burn side, so leaving the barley broth on the fire, and the lean cat on the hearth, they followed their maister and maistress to speer.

The meeting of Mrs. Wallingham and Rosa, was an intellectual banquet, to which, however

however great their mental appetite, they did not forget to invite the children of him, whose spirit they tenderly apostrophised.—Mrs. Walsingham, by whom they had been already embraced, called to them. At the sight of Rosa, Jessy threw an old straw bonnet, which hung on her arm, into the burn, and the delicate sickly Emma sunk into her mother's arms.

The effect of joyful surprises are not very terrific;—Mrs. Frazer's eyes were fixed on the slow moving burn while Mrs. Walsingham embraced her children; but she wept with joy at the sight of Rosa, whose endearments soon revived her daughter; “Ah my Kattie!” sighed she, “if my Kattie were but here.”

The doctor had his share of welcome; Jessy quite hung round his neck;—and Mrs. Steward, as a Bahanun, was included in the joyous gratulation;—nor was Peggy, the niece of Donald, who attended her mistress, forgotten.

Mr. Frazer scented the loaves and fishes; and as he had safe, under treble lock, some

old stores of the Major's, he invited the whole party to Castle Gowrand, and hastened forward himself, to prepare for their reception.

Mrs. Frazer whispered Jessy, who, scampering off in a moment, got before Mr. Frazer; and when the company arrived, the windows were unbarred, the hall door wide open, and though it was July, large faggots and coals blazing in every chimney in the house.

It was not the ill-dressed, and ill-served supper, that overspread the faces of Mrs. Walsingham and Rosa with melancholy; but the hospitable entertainer was no more; the heart which was warmed with every social virtue, had ceased to beat; and recollections would intrude, which could neither be repressed nor concealed. They pleaded fatigue, and were early attended to their chambers by the light-footed Jessy and followed by the pensive Emma.

The apartment designed for Mrs. Walsingham, was that occupied by the Major, previous to his removal to Edinburgh. Rosa
could

could not forget the place where she had passed so many anxious hours: she started, and wept.

Mrs. Walsingham, though ignorant of the cause of her emotion, was little less affected. Emma, whose heart adverted to the sad era of departed happiness, looked like an expiring angel; and Jessy sat down, crossing her sun-burnt arms on her bosom.

"I thought, Rosa," said Mrs. Walsingham, after a silent flood of tears, "to have heard how you have passed your time since our separation, and to have told you some things about myself; but we are neither of us fit for conversation, and cannot dismiss these dear children. Jessy shall be my bed-fellow—let Emma be yours; we shall have time for mutual communication when these interesting objects are not present."

Up jumped Jessy, and flying round Mrs. Walsingham's neck, cried out, "Oh, my own paupau's dear friend! he aw ways said you wud be gude tull hes pure lassies. Emma ses she wull nae stay wuth mauma and me—she wull gang tull heavene tull dear paupau;

paupau; but she munna dee—you wull nae lete her dee—lete her gang with you tull the sooth.”

“Can you part from your Emma, Jessy?” asked the fair invalid.

“Ay, indeed, Emm, I had rather pette wuth you tull the sooth, tull you gete beter, than lete you gang tull heavene tull dear paupau.”

Rosa could not speak; she courtesied to Mrs. Walsingham, and went with Emma to her old chamber, whence the hectic symptoms of her bed-fellow, and her own painful retrospects, banished sleep.

The Doctor, who saw with pain the state of Emma's health, took the opportunity of the ladies' retiring, to speak to Frazer; and as, he proposed taking her as a visitor to his sister's, prevailed on him to consent to her going to Edinburgh; and the large fortune likely to come into the family from Colonel Buhanun, put him in such good humour, that he offered to let Jessy accompany her sister, if her mother consented, as it was only on a *visit*.

Mrs. Frazer, in the mean time, invited Mrs. Steward to sit half an hour with her; and though that good woman despised her folly, she could not refuse to accept it.

A female visitor was a comfort, from which poor Mrs. Frazer was now entirely debarred, and the opportunity accident gave her of venting her grief into a feeling bosom, was not lost: she spoke in such sad, though animated terms of her first husband, and blended her regrets for him, with such lamentations for the injury his children sustained, that, instead of making a foe of a friend, as had been her custom, she had the good fortune to change an inveterate foe into a compassionating friend; Mrs. Steward thought no more of former errors; all that occupied her in respect to Mrs. Frazer was, her present misery.

Mrs. Walsingham was agreeably surprised when she understood the Doctor had anticipated her wish in regard to Emma, as his house, both as her guardian and for the advantage of medical skill, was at present the most eligible for her.

Jeffy

Jeffy insisted she was glad Emma was ganging sooth, she was sae seek.

Rosa could not imagine how it happened that Emma's dialect, though Scotch, was so lady-like, while Jeffy's was so much on a par with the common people.

The cause, Mrs. Steward said, was too obvious; her ear was good, and her conversation among those common people. Mrs. Frazer gives herself up—Emma is in ill health—and what, with such a fund of spirits, can poor Jeffy do, but talk to those who will talk to her, and run wild among inferior people.

The Doctor's lip quivered. "This evil," said he, "is not past remedy—the children of my friend shall not be lost."

"You will, however, remember, Doctor, the comfortless state of the poor mother."

"Why else have I proposed taking only Emma to Edinburgh?"

Mrs. Walsingham complimented him on the equal wisdom and humanity of his conduct: she trusted the evil was *not* past remedy; and whenever a consultation be-
came

came necessary, she hoped she would call in Doctor Walsingham and Doctor——”

“Walsingham junior—don’t be surprised my dear madam—I thought you had done with Walsingham;—and so, when”—Rosa stopped; but, perceiving neither Mr. nor Mrs. Frazer were yet present, she proceeded—“when I found I disgraced the name of Buhanun, I resigned it, and took that I expected you had dropped.”

Never was astonishment more strongly depicted than in the countenance of Mrs. Walsingham.

“Stop!” she cried—“let me be certain I hear right. Say not another word, least the hope that raises my soul to the skies be crushed. You have assumed the name of Walsingham—great and gracious God!—you left Edinburgh last summer—don’t answer—I cannot bear to believe you *can* answer, to strike me dumb for ever—I could not outlive the disappointment of my hopes. You travelled through Yorkshire—you undertook a task no human being could accomplish, that of informing the mind of a rude girl, who

who already thought of marriage—Oh! dear, dear Rosa! don't interrupt me—you fell into strange company, and—and—”

“Now, at least,” cried Rosa, “I may answer you:—all this did certainly happen, though I am surprised to hear it from you; but the strange company I met was my own mother, and her second husband.”

“Your mother! why she told me you was a stranger. Ah! if I had then known you had left Scotland, I must have been sure the description I heard could belong only to you. But, my Rosa! my sweet Rosa! if this woman—this *naughty* woman, then, was your cruel mother, did she not know you?”

Rosa perceived Mrs. Walsingham had heard of her mother's conduct. “I was,” she replied, “certain she was my mother, but I could not wish to make it known.”

“You were right—perfectly so. But Rosa—dear, dear girl! I am mortified you do not divine the question I long to ask:—did you fall into no other strange company, in a strange way? You blush, my amiable, my ever-destined child;—say, did you not
also

also meet an elegant, graceful, accomplished, handsome——Oh, Rosa! let me be garrulous in his praise, and do not withhold yours for the friend, the élève of your patron, him, to whom in his last hours he bequeathed you, who has sought you at Penry in vain——”

“Mr. Littleton!”

“Yes, Mr. Littleton—my son.”

“Oh, my dear friend! what do you say? Mr. Littleton your son!”

“Not Mr. Littleton, but Horace Montreville, the Earl of Gauntlet, the heir of the most respectable old officer in the kingdom; he is Horace Littleton, Colonel Buchanan’s favoured friend, and my son.”

Rosa changed colour—she gasped for breath—what an explanation was here! Littleton, who had inquired for her at Penry; Montreville, once so amiable, now so unworthy, the same person and son to the amiable woman so dear to her heart!—graceful! amiable! accomplished!—well might maternal fondness paint him thus! “And was it you, then, madam, who entered into Pontefract, amid the acclamations of the people?
did

did I pass your carriage? and did not my heart acknowledge you?"

"Your heart was, I hope, at that moment too busy to think on me."

It was at least busy enough now; nor was it only hers that was painfully agitated;—the Doctor was all earnest attention—this *handsome, graceful, accomplished* being interested *him*.

Rosa felt a faint sensation; her ears rung, and her sight failed; she could just ask for water before she reached the sash of the window.

Magdalena, for we must no longer call her Walsingham, saw and felt an emotion, which she flattered herself proceeded from excess of joy. He son was, in her fond estimation, every thing that was amiable; could he then have failed to make an impression, where it was so much his wish?

Rosa was removed into the air; and when she recovered, wept violently.

"There is no such thing as perfect happiness, else I must now feel it," cried Magdalena. "How have I regretted the fatality

lity that threw my son into the society of a woman whom notwithstanding appearances were in every respect against her, he adored! what arguments, what persuasions, what adjurations have I not vainly used to wean him from a passion I thought not only unfortunate but dishonourable, because the good man, to whom he owed more than life, left him joint heir with you to his fortune! If he had seen you, I knew he must have loved you. Never were two minds so well paired; the fortune is not a consideration, but you, Rosa, are *my* choice as well as his; and now I find, that among the miracles of my eventful life it is not the least, that Providence has directed my son to the woman whom, above all others, is most acceptable to his mother, and to whom he was bound, by honour and gratitude—I dare not indulge my joy, Rosa—I fear your heart is cold; and if it be, my son, my only child, will be miserable.”

Magdalena's dignity was absorbed in melting agony.

“ Your

“ Your eyes, Rosa, your speaking eyes greet not my feelings ; but I amaze, yes, I perceive I also interest your friends ; let the carriage be ordered an hour later, and hear the sufferings of the solitaire of the Burn side. It is a justification I owe the memory of the father of these dear children, and you can never hear it at a more interesting moment.”

Every being present were indeed anxiously interested, and expressed a proper sense of the gratification which, with grace, feeling, and energy, she offered them.

“ Such had been the distraction and terror of the miserable Magdalena, she had not heard, or did not remember, the names of her protectors ;—she had indeed so much recollection as served to relate the story of her wrongs to them ; but the guilt of murder on a mind, in which the sense of religious duties was stronger than even maternal affection, after the first unfortunate shock, left no attention to local circumstances ; and when put on board the yacht by Lord Vallerton, she

she was even ignorant of her destination ; for though escaping from an ignominious death, to escape from herself was impossible.

“ The yacht, as reported, was lost on the Scotch coast, and Magdalena, the only person who survived, equally fearing and loathing the thought of returning to the world, we have seen her mind tranquillized in a solitude, where, but for one congenial spirit, she would have shared the fate of her servant Donald.—The Major, though he had been forbid to talk to her of the affairs of the great world, except where he was himself particularly interested, sometimes carried a newspaper in his pocket, and read particular selected passages ; one of these, which he had left, happened to attract her notice,—the front column presented the advertisement for evidence relative to her own marriage and her son’s birth.

“ What a revolution in her system did this important paper produce ; all her maternal feelings were renovated ; her son was probably in existence ; and even if ignominious death awaited her, how poor a sacrifice was life

life in exchange for the blessing of seeing her son, and seeing him restored to his native right;—but while she resolved to risk every thing for her child, she did not forget the falsehood and injustice she had herself met with, nor the many instances of art, by which the victim, of whom she read, fell into the toils of their enemies. Taking, therefore, Peggy as her only attendant, she directed Donald to order a chaise to wait for her at the bridge end, half a mile from his dwelling, and without hinting at the purport of her journey, where she was going, or the time of her absence, braved the encreasing storm and left her solitude four hours after the Major took a last leave of her, and arrived without accident in London.

“ Her first enquiry was after Mr. Adderly ; that good man, as full of honour as of years, was yet living, but not in town. She would not dare to write ; and though time must have altered her person, feared to be seen ; she therefore, after concealing herself in an obscure part of the town, set off to Bath, where she was told the good banker was :—

He

He had unfortunately left that city on a visit to a nobleman in Devonshire, whither she feared to follow him; so that some months had elapsed before the moment arrived which terminated her misfortunes.

The instant she made herself known to Mr. Adderley, she heard her husband had died a natural death, and that her son, acknowledged by her father, was suing for his natural right with every prospect of success;—he had, he said, been paid every way by the Admiral for the services he had been so happy as to render his daughter, but he would now render him one for which no adequate payment could be made; he would have the pleasure of restoring to a respectable parent his only child.

Admiral Herbert received her with wonder and transport; and she found her son even more than a mother's fondest wish;—when last indeed she saw him, she pressed the rosy lip of a cherubim, but he was now pale, languid and indisposed.

Magdalena's soothing tenderness won the confidence of her son, and it was with infinite

pain that she understood his indisposition was the consequence of an internal struggle between a sense of honour and a passion he had found irresistible.

Colonel Buhanun had, in his last moments, received his word of honour, if not rejected by his protégée, to unite his fate with hers; and though the copy of a will left in England, with a codicil, leaving him joint heir with the young lady to his fortune, had been seized in the plunder at Bedanore, and though his own fortune was now so large, he had made enquiries after her, with intention to offer himself to her acceptance, before he saw her on whom his fate now hung.

His surprise to find his mother knew the Colonel's protégée, did not equal her sorrow that *he* had not *also* known her. She however, in compliance with his earnest entreaty, went herself to Pontefract to judge of the merit of his paragon; but she found Mrs. Garnet pining for the loss of her name-sake, and ignorant of every thing concerning her.

This was a heavy disappointment to her son; but gave her hope, that the enchantress, whom

whom she concluded was an adventures, having thus vanished, the charms of Rosa must supersede the light impression of a travelling heroine; and she was preparing to accompany him to Edinburgh, when her father's indisposition detained her at the Grange; but sanguine in her hope, and anxious he should acquit himself with honour to his deceased friend, she gave him credentials, and he set off to Edinburgh, charged with commission to bring Rosa to the Grange; it was from him she heard of the Major's death, the marriage of his widow, Kattie's elopement, and Rosa's leaving the family.

And here ended Magdalena's narrative, which received, as it deserved, the thanks of the company;—Rosa only was silent; she had wept over every misfortune of her friend's life: warm'd with her friends; abhorred her enemies; trembled for her danger; exulted in her escape, and felt, as if herself, cheered by the paternal kindness that received and welcomed the wanderer home; but the coldness with which she attended to all the interests

of her son, could not escape the observation of Magdalena.

How indeed, with Mrs. Woudbe and the signature of the "adoring H. Montreville" full in her mind's eye, could she be other-ways than cold to praises so animated, which flowed from maternal enthusiasm, on a man whom she considered as the most specious, as well as deceitful, of his sex.

Yet, should the pleasing illusion be torn from the heart of the fond mother by her! should she be the first to announce to the most amiable and respectable of women, that there were yet sorrows in store for her; that the honour of her principles were fated to receive a wound it would require all her piety and resignation to sustain? Ah! no,—let the hard truth come from one who would not, like her, feel the pang both as inflictor and sufferer.

"Propitious, my dearest Rosa," said Magdalena, "to my beloved Horace be your silence; but I urge no more; you are not the frank, the generous Rosa, I once knew; your heart is cased in cold reserve; you

you do not approve, nay, you dislike the most honourable and amiable young man in the world, in whose eyes you are a paragon. I say nothing of his fortune; I know you too well.”—

Rosa was still silent;—it was indeed not possible to answer without wounding the sensibility of a mother, or violating her own veracity.

“Enough,” said Magdalena, and visibly checking herself, no longer mentioned her son.

Rosa was ready to add her narrative to that of her friend, but it was not required,—

“I am rich, Rosa,” said Magdalena, after a short silence: “My father’s fortune is very large; my son, who is his heir and the heir of his own father, has a more splendid estate than either, independant.”

Rosa was surprised.—“Good God!” she exclaimed, “can then the turpitude.”—she stopped.

“What turpitude? to what do you allude, Rosa?—What! dumb again.—Well, I was not vaunting of prospects; I meant only to

let you know, that when you would accept it, it would be my happiness to accommodate you, and that I could do it without inconvenience."

Rosa never felt the blessing of Lady Denningcourt's protection so much as at this moment; as without it she might have been reduced to accept pecuniary obligations from the mother of the rich Montreville, in whose behalf the wishes of that mother, of her friend, the Major's friend, were so irksome, that the ordering the carriages was a relief; and thus the meeting so desired, so beyond hope, and which she had long looked to as the end of misfortune, was terminating with coldness on one side and anger on the other.

The carriages were now again announced; Mrs. Frazer's respect for the character she had traduced, took from her all power to apologize—

The Doctor looked at Magdalena with admiration, and Mrs. Steward thought her a first female character;—their eyes followed her, as she walked slowly to her carriage, leading Emma and followed by Peggy.

Rosa

Rosa had almost forgotten Lady Denningcourt's commission ; she took out her pocket book—

“ I have done every thing, whispered Magdalena.”

“ I am only the agent of another heart as kind, as generous as your own.”

“ *My* heart, Rosa, is really kind to *you*.”

“ Oh how can I ever doubt—”

“ Yet you are reserved ; you dare not trust me.”

Rosa was silent.

“ Obstinate ! inexorable !—Come Emma, we will not divide Rosa from her friends.”

When they had lost sight of the bowing Mr. Frazer, his weeping wife, and could no longer hear Jeffy's loud fare ye wells, “ How came it, my dear,” cried Mrs. Steward, “ that in the history you were so good as to give us of your adventures, you did not mention this all-accomplished cavalier, who proves to be your friend's son !”

Rosa replied, it was not necessary, when she spoke of a gentleman who rescued her from danger, to do it with the enthusiasm of maternal tenderness.

"Happy man!" exclaimed the Doctor.

"It was him then!—Well, I say with the Doctor, happy man; he is I perceive your fate."

Rosa firmly answered—"No."

Doctor Cameron settled himself comfortably on the seat.

"Is he like his mother?" Mrs. Steward asked.

The resemblance would not have struck Rosa, but his eyes were like, and his figure as fine.

"Then he is handsome!"

"Extremely."

"And graceful?"

"Perfectly."

"And accomplished?"

"I think so."

"And yet my dear."—

"And yet, Mrs. Steward, he is not my fate."

"The road," the doctor observed, "was remarkably pleasant."

"Yet!"

As the day was so far advanced, they did not stop to dine, but meant to take a slight repast, after crossing the ferry.

Magdalena was solemn and reserved; Rosa silent, but affectionate.

As it would be late when they reached Edinburgh, Magdalena gave her card at "Steele and Montgomerie's:"—Rosa returned hers at Lady Hopely's:—and the doctor agreeing to call for Emma, after setting Rosa down, they got into the carriages, and kissed hands as the roads separated at the entrance of Edinburgh.

Rosa had been silent during most part of the way from the ferry, and she burst into tears when she lost sight of Magdalena's carriage.

A few minutes set her down at Lady Hopely's door, and before it closed, Lady Hopely appeared, with so much unpleasant meaning in her countenance, that Rosa exclaimed, "Dear madam, I fear to ask——."

"Ah my dear!" replied Lady Hopely, leading her in, "here is sad work; that poor

girl is more mad than ever; she will not speak to her mother; and we fear she has even taken a dislike to you."

Rosa did not stay to hear more; she flew to Elinor's room, and to her grief and astonishment found Lady Hopely's fears verified: Elinor turned from her with disgust, went into an adjoining room, and absolutely refused to admit her.

"I protest," said Lady Hopely, "I do most sincerely wish Lady Denningcourt may, if this fit continues, send her to some private mad-house, she will else actually be her death."

Rosa now hastened to Lady Denningcourt, whom she found in dishabille, with swollen eyes and wan countenance, talking with a tall, fresh coloured woman; who, though her hair was as white as snow, had all her sound white teeth, and seemed listening, with attentive feeling, to the sorrowing mother.

"Oh my dear Miss Walsingham," she cried, "my misery is complete, if Elinor has really taken an aversion to you."

Rosa wept.

Lady

Lady Denningcourt was grieved to tell her, that though it was the doctor's opinion her absence had hurt the poor girl, he was himself at a loss to account for so sudden a change; and beside, that her madness was literally a madness with method: she pretended to have been deceived, and therefore suffered no body but Betty to approach her: she was twice surprised by Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, the elderly person who now courted to Rosa, telling her money, of which she had a considerable quantity; for it was now first recollected, that though when in her most gloomy fits, nothing was so acceptable to her as money, she never laid any out.

Hoping to win on her, by what she seemed to like so well, her mother had given her a card purse full of guineas; she took the purse, but her behaviour was the same.

The doctor thought that the constant routine of company disturbed her, and advised leaving Edinburgh, which Lady Denningcourt resolved to do in a very short time;—she had, in the mean while, sent for Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, on whom she could de-

pend, to assist Betty, as they had left the attendant at Denningcourt.

Rosa hoped this, like her other sudden fits, would go off; but the doctor's opinion did not confirm that hope; he was actually staggered;—she eat, drank, and was perfectly collected, but refused to sit in a room, or be seen by any body but Betty.

Such extraordinary symptoms, naturally led to an inquiry of her preceding conduct. She had been chearful, though anxious, after Rosa's departure; had sat with Lady Hopely's daughters, and walked to the library at the cross with Lady Susan, before dinner, to look out some new books. In the evening, as she objected to the promenade, she took one of the new books, Lady Susan another, and they crossed the street to the fields. Presently Lady Susan, who was reading so attentively, that she had got a few paces on, heard a shriek, and turning short, saw Elinor had dropped her book and stood still, trembling and pale. She went to her immediately;—two or three common people were about, but none, as she thought, near enough to have frightened

frightened her. She, however, could not or did not, assign any cause for her emotion; and Lady Susan, who was now more frightened than herself, sent a woman to her mother for assistance;—but it was with reluctance, and not till she saw the doctor, of whom she stood in some fear, she would suffer herself to be led home.

Lady Hopely was vexed and disappointed. As the Dowager resolved, on returning home, she would not, she said, burthen her friends with her calamity:—if her daughter recovered this fit, she might have another at Athelane, where the Duke was, at this time of the year, in the habit of giving splendid entertainments. She grieved that Miss Walsingham should be disappointed, but was resolved to atone for the injury her child sustained, from a deprivation of early maternal care, by devoting her life and fortune to hers, whatever might be her fate. She hoped the dreary prospect would not appal Miss Walsingham; for she confessed that *her* society seemed like a pearl in the cup of affliction; living, she would study her happiness in re-

turn

turn for that she would certainly receive from her;—and dead, she would liberally requite her.

The world had as few charms for Rosa, as for Lady Denningcourt;—she could not see so elegant and amiable a woman, almost in the prime of life, devote herself to sorrow, without feeling a sensation of sympathy mixed with affectionate respect; and declared it would be the pride of her existence, to meliorate the affliction it had pleased heaven to inflict; and certain it is, she did, from that hour, meliorate every painful sensation in the bosom of Lady Denningcourt.

This night, like the last, Elinor refused going to bed with any other person in the room. “Betty might sleep in the closet;” and as she had rested well after this indulgence, it was repeated; with the precaution however, of nailing down the lower sashes of the window.

Of this, she at first complained, for want of air; but as the upper sashes let down, she was soon easy.

The next morning, Rosa wished to wait on Magdalena; but Lady Denningcourt
was

was so much indisposed, and so anxious to have her reports of Elinor who however would hardly speak or look at her, that she found it impossible.

In the height of a domestic affliction, to which Lady Hopely sacrificed all her visitors, and which her daughters were too amiable not to feel, it would also be improper for her to receive company at home, and therefore she wrote cards of excuse to Doctor Cameron, Mrs. Steward, and Emma; but it was not till after blotting near a dozen sheets of paper, with mingled tears and ink, she could resolve on one to send Magdalena.— She simply stated, that a domestic misfortune in the family where she had the honour to reside, prevented her from seeing her, whom she never could cease to love:— begged her favourable thoughts, and lamented a cause, which certainly did exist, why her heart must appear inaccessible to the friend who was so dear to her; to this she received the following answer:—

My

My dear Rosa,

— “I have not slept since I parted with you;—but I have been used to court sleep in vain;—there was nothing new therefore in that;—I perceive there is a *cause*, but whether it is a *reason*, time will prove:—my carriage is at the door:—my letters by this morning’s post demand my presence in London, and I only waited to see or hear from you:—tell me if Lady Hopely’s is your permanent address:—need I say you will hear again of—

M. MONTREVILLE.”

Rosa immediately returned a short note and inclosed Lady Denningcourt’s address, easier in the idea, that Magdalena was obliged to leave Scotland, than if she had remained near, without the possibility of a free intercourse, and without a disposition to wish it.

The evening of a day that afforded no ray of hope in respect to Elinor, was now shutting in; and Rosa was slowly passing her door,

door, toward Lady Denningcourt's, when she popped her head out, just to say, "Rosa, you have deceived me, but I forgive you," and closed it instantly. Rosa sighed, went on, and sat with the Countess till the hour of rest; when having looked in on Elinor, she returned to her own chamber.

What sort of sleepers Lady Hopely's domestics might be, does not appear; but no doubt the kitchen maid, whose business it was to clean the steps, was surprised to find the door on a jar at six o'clock next morning; as the police however of Edinburgh is so excellent, that few night robberies are known there, she thought it might be accident, and so let it rest with herself. Before eight however, the house was alarmed by a violent knocking and calling, from the closet where Betty slept.

Lady Denningcourt, whom care rendered wakeful, was the first, and Rosa, who was reading and inhaling the pure air of her window, the second, to hear it; they ran into Elinor's chamber terrified with forebodings of some mischief, and found Betty a fast prisoner in

in the closet; the door being locked and bolted outside.

“What whim is this, my dear child?” said Lady Denningcourt, approaching the bed, where the curtains were drawn round:—but no Elinor was there.

Lady Denningcourt fell on the floor speechless; and Rosa, filled with the most fearful apprehensions, ran from room to room, calling on Elinor, dear Elinor:—no Elinor answered.

The kitchen maid, amid the general alarm, revealed her secret about the door:—the apprehensions for Elinor increased:—every servant, and as many chairmen as could be found, were dispatched different ways:—but while Rosa held volatiles to Lady Denningcourt, who fell from one fainting fit into another, and the ladies all sat in momentary expectation of some dreadful catastrophe, the house maid brought in an odd glove a pocket handkerchief, and a small packet of papers, dropped in going down the back stairs, by Elinor, which, on being opened, developed the whole mystery; and proved,
that

that by this time her madness had ended in
"amazement."

PAPER I.

"My dear Elinor,

"I am so overjoyed, I don't know how to write. I saw you at the Cross to day, but you did not know me. If you can open your window when it is dark, and let down a string, any weight tied to it, I will tie a letter, which you may draw up—I won't venture to say more."

PAPER II.

"Oh, my dear love! Providence or love sure gave me the power to put my note on your book, and contrived this method of telling you what I have suffered since you was taken from me. I was sent to my father's like a thief, who you, my dear love and friend, knows was no father. I hope I
never

never shall lift my hand against him ; but he used me like a dog, and kept me tied, on bread and water, till two men came and took me to London in a coach, and then I was happy, because I thought I would beg my way to Cumberland ;—but oh, my dear love ! I was in prison—my own father swore a debt against me ;—to be sure he paid my board, but what was that, or a golden crown, without you, my dear love ? Providence knew I meant no hurt, only to have my dear love ;—so I was released by a serjeant, who was recruiting for the regiment, now on duty here ; who, before my cruel father knew any thing of the matter, paid the debt, and took me away. I was preparing to desert, if it cost my life—for what is life without my dear love ? when I met you, Oh, my dear love, now you are in the country, where you may do what you please ;—you remember what you have promised to one who has no friend but his dear love—such an opportunity will never come again ; and indeed, my dear love, I had rather die at once than lose you, my own love. I shall stay here, under
the

the shade of the wall, till you drop an answer; and as I have got paper and pen and ink ready, can write any thing by the lamp lights to my dear love."

PAPER III.

"God Almighty bless my dear love! I will pray for you night and day. Thirty pounds is the price of the discharge—what you dropped is a great deal more than will be wanting. I will go directly about it—God for ever bless my dear love!"

PAPER IV.

"All is done—I have bought the clothes, and am now dressed in them—it is not the first time you have given me a coat to my back. I shall have the chaise exactly at four—not earlier, else we shall be at the place too soon; where I agreed for a parson, and then we will go on all the way, my love."

PAPER

PAPER V.

"All is ready—put on the gown boldly—it is exactly the colour—and you are near the size of the maid:—I shake from top to toe."

To conceive the astonishment of the ladies at reading these letters is impossible.

"I do remember," cried Lady Susan, "there was a soldier passed us at the time."

"So, then," said Lady Mary, "Miss Athelane is really——"

A look from her mother stopped her.

"My dear Countess," cried Lady Hopely, "you don't speak—what do you say to this?—what shall we do?"

Lady Denningcourt at once revived;—no longer terrified by the momentary expectation of hearing some fatal news of Elinor, the elopement was rather welcome, as a relief from fear of something worse.

"Recall all your people in the first instance," she replied, "that so bad an act may not disgrace your amiable daughters, and my

as

as amiable Rosa. There is no derangement in this business—it is her own deliberate act;—I have already taken my resolution—I can never associate with these Croaks, or their sort—nor would my unhappy child have ever been at ease with me or my sort. I will immediately settle a handsome annuity on her; but if her children be my heirs, I will educate them. Rosa, I brought this poor girl into the world in sorrow; she could not feel affection for a mother, whom she only knew as the being who deprived her of all she loved. I felt this at the moment; but though I strove to attach her to me, by every act of indulgence, my love for her was the love of duty, *that* has not nor ever will be abated; but there are certain comforts in looking forward to a dear and amiable companion; and while *you* remain with me, that comfort will be mine;—you are dearer to me than I *can* express—*you* will not leave me?”

“Never, never!” cried Rosa, dropping on her knees.

“No, I will be bound for her,” said Lady Hopely, delighted to find an event, which at first she feared would have a fatal effect on her

her friend, received with such temper and resignation.

“*Never* is too long a period for you, my dear Rosa, to promise, or your bondswoman to engage,” cried Lady Mary. “I’ll lay my life of something just come into my head.”

“I know what is come into *my* head,” cried Lady Susan—“we shall be the talk of Edinburgh.”

“And therefore, let us leave it before the races!” cried Lady Mary.

Lady Denningcourt was grieved, but she knew her friends too well to suppose any apology necessary from them: she instantly ordered her people to get ready—Lady Hopely did the same, urging her friend to accompany her to Hopely; but as Lady Denningcourt had determined on not going to Athelane, and as she wished to consult the Duke before any establishment was formed for her daughter, she declined the invitation; and by twelve o’clock left Edinburgh with Rosa in her carriage—the good Mrs. Moggy M’Laurin had part of the doctor’s chaise; and as they travelled post, reached Denningcourt by dinner on the third day.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

*A Wedding—Mrs. Feversham in her element—
Mrs. Brown in the dumps—and an Old Woman
peeping through her Spectacles to the
denouement of the Beggar's History.*

ROSA's endeavours to prevent Lady Denningcourt's thoughts from dwelling too intensely on the conduct of her daughter, during the journey, were even more successful than she could have hoped;—she was indeed happily in possession of anecdotes which could not tire her auditor:—every remembrance

of Colonel Buhanun; every letter he had wrote; the minutest particular respecting him, was interesting; and though it was her wish to avoid ever adverting to Montreville, yet his early anecdotes were so blended with her own story, that she got entangled in the course of her conversation, and could neither proceed nor retreat, without introducing both his story and his mother's.

“ My dear child !” cried the Countess, in astonishment, “ what is this you are telling me ? are you not exercising a pretty inventive fancy ?”

“ Inventive !” repeated Rosa, deeply blushing, from an idea that Lady Denningcourt knew the young man.

“ It appears so extraordinary, so incredible to me,” replied her ladyship, “ that I can hardly believe you have been speaking of certain facts ;—the mother of this young man living !—saved from shipwreck !—so long a solitary recluse in Scotland !—my father Rosa the late Lord Denningcourt and myself,

myself, were the happy protectors of that injured woman."

"You, madam! good heavens! but you certainly are, in some shape or other, connected with all good people, and an active party in all good actions."

"Not quite all, my dear;—but this is a pleasure I could never have expected, and I owe you a vast deal for the information;—I am now indeed interested in the event of the law suit."

When the carriage drove up to the entrance of the Jointure-house, Lady Denningcourt expected the Duke of Athelane would have been, as usual, ready to welcome her home, as the out-rider she had sent to announce her return, must have arrived; but before she had time to express her surprise that he did not, the unopened letters addressed to him from herself, which lay on his table, proved that he had left the Jointure-house.

Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, who, the moment she alighted, had enquired how her gude lórde

duke ded? followed with, "Eh my lady, dinna ai coonsel ye tull gang tull Athelane?"

"Why fure my uncle is not returned thither?"

"Trothe es he, my lady."

"And my niece?"

"Endeed es she."

"And Margaret Bruce?"

"Hoot! hoo caun ye doot thaut? ye ken she's aw way the shade ow of Mefs Angus."

Lady Denningcourt was amazed; according to her calculation, this was the day of the grand ball *al fresco*, which was to conclude the marriage festivals. The house-keeper was rung for; but as she only knew the wedding had not taken place, it is fit the reader should be better informed.—The story was this.

Mr. Josiah Turgid succeeded his uncle in five thousand pounds, and a set of warm clients;

clients; he had therefore a fortune and character ready made to his hand.

Mr. Lemuel Supple, on the contrary, had no more coats than backs, and both very bare;—when at a Westminster election, he being a pot-walloper, though in the one garret he kept for his family use out of a house for which he paid, or agreed to pay twelve pounds per year, no such thing as a pot, and very seldom a fire was seen:—but a pot-walloper he unquestionably was, and a glorious harvest he made of this same election; for it was Supple here, Supple there; Supple do this; swear that; and all they said, that and more did Mr. Lemuel Supple do;—by these means he got in good case, and two coats; but what made his fortune, was a long bill he presented to the committee of the sitting member; and, as they were weak enough to dispute it, as the defendant was an unpopular man, and the bill a little obscure, the jury found a verdict for the plaintiff. This made his fortune, and the world gave his character; after which he was in wonderful request;

and had all the nobles in the land been Lord Gauntlets, he would have had every man of them.

In the case of Gauntlet versus Mushroom, Mr. Supple had many points to conceal; talked with great volubility, but produced none of the documents demanded by Mr. Josiah Turgid, who had many points to find out, and did not talk at all.

It was an ill-fated morning which brought two unwelcome expresses to Delworth; one for the beautiful Countess, the other for Sir Solomon Mushroom, in the person of Mr. Josiah Turgid himself, whose suspicion of foul play made him so watchful and jealous, that he had procured a copy of the deed of renunciation signed by the Earl and Countess, of those very estates, and that very title, for which his client was on the point of paying eighty thousand pounds; and as the stated time for the Earl's descent from the peerage, was within fourteen days after the legitimacy of his nephew should be proved; and as that was now done, Mr. Turgid had taken the
most

most expeditious mode of informing Sir Solomon of the whole business.

Such of our readers as have visited that grand and useful appendage to the honour and crown of Great-Britain, the wild beasts in the Tower, and have heard the savage monarch of the woods in a rage for his supper, may conceive something like the Knight, at this discovery; but nothing in that, or any other curious collection, can give an idea of the fury of the beautiful Countess, when he presumed to speak, in a loud key, to her on the business.

Lady Gauntlet had indeed received an express, ill calculated to sweeten her temper.

Admiral Herbert, notwithstanding the most strenuous endeavours, on the part of her friends, to avert the misfortune, had been at court, where he did not trouble any great man to present him: he had made his bows at sea, and his services were his patrons; he boldly shewed himself where those services were of the greatest importance, demanded an audience, and delivered a plain

tale, with such feeling and truth, that the pension on the Irish establishment designed for the beautiful Countess, was reserved for some other, and it is hoped, worthier purpose. Notice was sent to the friends of her divine ladyship, that her presence would be dispensed with; and a note from the minister, forwarded with due delicacy, to request the Earl's resignation of his appointments.

In the midst of these vexations, it was very hard on Lady Gauntlet to have the torments of futurity anticipated, by letting loose one of her own black implements to torture and upbraid her; it was too much, and the knight, ignorant of the infinitude of her griefs, thinking it was his reproaches that changed the face of an angel into foaming fury, was appalled.

"To think, madam," said he, in a softer tone, "that you should so treacherously abandon *me*—me, who have been so faithful to your interest;—who exposed my character;—who —"

"Who wrote the villanous scroll, of which this is a copy," cried she, shewing the rough

rough draught of his offer to Montreville, which he had given to Charlotte, and which she had entrusted to her mother.

Sir Solomon gnashed his teeth; drops of perspiration stood on his forehead.

While she traced his nefarious practices through life, from the beginning of his artful career to that moment, marking the officious intelligence he brought from London respecting the wife of the late Earl, and the letters he wrote to Montreville, as the two grand epochs of his life, with a volubility, precision, and malice that bore down every thing before it; and when she retired, left poor Sir Solomon, with distended eyes, dropped jaw, and shaking limbs without power to move. In this condition he was found by Mrs. Feversham and Miss Mushroom.

"Why what, in the name of wonder," cried Mrs. Feversham, "is the matter with Sir Solomon! sure, Sir, you are unwell?"

"Law! Mrs. Feversham, you are always finding out one strange thing or another."

"Charlotte," said Sir Solomon, "you must prepare to leave this house—you have narrowly escaped ruin, and had it not been for my friend Mr. Josiah Turgid—"

"Law, uncle! I am sure he is a very troublesome, dawdling, old fellow; he can have done no good."

"Charlotte, you must not marry this son of the Gauntlets."

"Not marry him! not marry Lord Delworth! what, after making such a piece of work! after inviting all the world to the wedding! and making that beggarly Lord at the castle as jealous as a moor! not marry!"

"No, not marry! Get your things ready, or leave the house with me without them."

"For my part," joined Mrs. Feversham, "though the house is pretty enough, nay, though it is very pretty, here are such in and out, hocus pocus doings, that I protest I shan't be sorry——"

"*You* shan't be sorry, ma'am. Well, that is too bad; pray who thinks of your sorrow? my uncle does not consult you."

"Well,

"Well, don't vex yourself about me, you dear disagreeable thing, for I have a notion you will have affairs enough of more consequence."

"I say we will set off immediately."

"Set off, uncle! Law! I wish that Mr. Turgid had been hanged. I cannot set off, nor I can't be off; Lord Delworth and I have been as good as man and wife ever since I have been in the country."

"Hush—sh—sh—sh!" cried Mrs. Feverham.

"What does the scorpion say," demanded Sir Solomon.

"No, ma'am, I shall not hush, nor need my uncle be in a passion; for Lord Delworth is a man of honour, and we are bound to each other."

"Will he marry you, madam, without my money?"

"Law, uncle! do you think I can ask him such an odd question?"

"Ay, Sir Solomon," said Mrs. Feversham, "that would be an odd question, indeed."

"However, Sir, (and Miss Mushroom at that moment happening to recollect about five hundred cases in point, which, in all her reading, she had never known to be given up, she assumed an air of dignity) my honour and my heart are in my own keeping; I have pledged the one, and yielded the other: so, Sir, though I should be extremely sorry to offend you, I *must* say I shall keep to my engagement."

"You will."

"Indubitably."

"Why then, by God madam, you shall indubitably starve."

"Cruel uncle! unhappy Delworth! undone Charlotte!"—and the wretched fair put her handkerchief to her eyes, and hastening out at the door, was the next moment seen passing the window, hanging on the arm of her lover.

"Poor girl!" cried Mrs. Feversham!
"You must not be surprised, Sir Solomon;
you

you can't suppose her heart is to be drawn off and on as you tie or untie your money-bags; she is in love—but, heavens! Sir Solomon, what is the matter?"

Chronic diseases had begun to make great breaches in the equanimity of the knight's disposition, even before Mrs. Feversham left Mushroom-house. The alternate struggles of passion, grief, rage, and fear, were too much for him to contend with at once; it turned the current of his blood; he became black in the face, then broke out into profuse perspiration, and was carried, by direction of Mrs. Feversham, to bed, with an attack of the gout in his stomach, that promised fair to take him off.

News of this sort, whether good or bad, circulates with amazing rapidity. Lady Gauntlet would not condescend to enter his chamber; but she heard from two doctors, who were summoned, that it was doubtful whether he could live till morning.

Lord and Lady Gauntlet were just now almost bewildered with difficulties, inasmuch as when nobody disputed his *Lordship* and he

he possessed a fine clear estate, his creditors were numerous, and somewhat impatient. Now he was, or would be in a few days, reduced to plain Mr. Montreville, with no treasure but a beautiful wife who had been in her bloom five and twenty years, and who had lost all her interest. The alternative of a prison or exile admitted of no doubt as to preference; and it struck her ladyship, that Sir Solomon's money, as to be sure he must die, would make them vastly comfortable: she therefore gave her son his lesson; and though the paroxysms of Sir Solomon's disorder were frequent and dreadful, Lord Delworth could not bear his dear Charlotte out of his sight one moment.

— Lady Gauntlet had the better opportunity to arrange her grand affairs, as Mrs. Feversham, finding nobody else cared about the sick man by whose death her least loss would be her annuity, nailed herself to the bed side, and followed up the doctor's medicines and directions with such zeal, that by day-light the next morning, when he was expected to be a corpse, the fit had left him, and he was
thanking

thanking Mrs. Feversham for the life she had, he said, preserved.

Although Sir Solomon did not ask for Charlotte, yet now that he was better, and her annuity secured, Mrs. Feversham thought she would let the dear disagreeable thing know;—but, lo! her room was empty, her clothes gone, and her woman, Mrs. Persian, lamenting that she, who was the best dresser of hair and layer-on of *rouge* of any English woman in London, should have demeaned herself so much as to wait on the niece of a simple knight, who had the assurance to elope without letting her into the secret.

Mrs. Persian, the butler said, need not take on so; there had been more elopements without the knowledge of as good servants as she; for, in the first place, Mrs Woudbe, an artful, old devil—”

“*Old!* Mr. Butler;”—Mrs. Feversham by no means thought Mrs. Woudbe could be an *old* woman, though in every other respect, she was bad enough.

The butler nodded an affirmative. Mrs. Woudbe then, the young Mrs. Woudbe, if
the

the lady would have it so, set off at seven last night, and Madam Rosette, with the young ladies, were to bear her company part of the way; but, poor girls, he dared to say, their faces would never be seen there again; and how the devil the Countess, Lord Delworth, the Major, and Mrs. Modely got off he could not think, as none of the servants heard them—but off they all were. “As to me,” he added, “I have saved a pretty decent fortune, so indeed have most of the men, and we don’t mind a year or two’s wages, but it will fall hard on the women.”

“What a simpleton am I!” cried Mrs. Feverham, “to listen to all this prating, and I dare say not a word true—I will go to Lady Gauntlet directly.” So said, so done; but facts were exactly as Mr. Butler had stated them.

This was the eve of the intended wedding-day, when cooks, confectioners, carpenters, fiddlers, taylors, lampmen and all sorts of trades, were to make the joyful finish to their work; and they no sooner heard that there would be no wedding, nor any money, than they

they began to be very loud, and very blunt.

What could poor Mrs. Feverham do in this case? Sir Solomon still lay, tho' out of danger, in a state that rendered it impossible to disclose the situation of matters to him. The Rev. Mr. Brudenel, indeed, who came down, with a special licence in his pocket, to marry the young pair, continued in the house, for a reason that often makes close housekeepers—he had not money to pay the expence of the journey for his wife and self to London; and all he could say to appease the people was scoffed at.

In this exigence, Lady Louisa, who was terrified and indisposed, advised sending to request the protection of Lord Denningcourt and the Duke of Athelane, who both readily obeyed the signal of distress; and by some money from the latter, and fair promises from the former, prevailed on the people to disperse.

The wedding, the carnival, the balls *al fresco*, were of course, knocked up; and the Duke conveyed his two damsels to Athelane,
lane,

lane, from whence he proposed to write to Lady Denningcourt.

The aggregate of this history, told by the housekeeper, was truly a surprise to Lady Denningcourt and Rosa; the latter of whom, on going up to change her dress, was followed by Mrs. Brown.

“Oh geminigig, Miss Rosa,” cried Betty, in a tone between a whine and a scold, “you see, Miss Rosy, my suffrens are never to ind; one trouble after another, oh dear! oh dear! what a misfortunate woman I am; to think of Miss Elinor, to come to go to serve me in this manner, as to run away with that skape-grace, Jack Croak; for as to my liven again with any of the Croaks, or Madam Bawsky, why ’tis quite out of character, out of the frying pan into the fire, and I shan’t do no such thing. Oh dear, oh dear! to think of my suffrens would melt a heart of stone.— And pray, Miss Rosa, can you think what is gone with that poor ignorant man, my husband? to think as he no sooner hopp’d off with his one leg, then that silly Miss Elinor should ruin me in this cruel manner.”

Rosa’s

Rosa's mind had been so busied by the events which rapidly succeeded each other at Edinburgh, that after her first surprise, at finding he had not been with th Doctor, she had not thought of poor John.

"Poor Mr. Brown!" she exclaimed;—"Indeed Betty, I am quite uneasy about him. I expected to have both seen and heard of him at Edingburgh."

"At Edinburgh!—Lord, Miss Rosa, why what should he do there? that would be only gwain further field to tread in the mire; fort thogh Skutlun is not such a devilditch place as I thought, there is a plentiful scarcity of poor hobjeks there I am sure; they talk of the good politifies of the city, but 'tis all great cry and little wool; for if there is not no thieves, there's baggars enough:—Not that I disparage baggars, Miss Rosa, fur from it; I am sure if I did not clean you myself, I stood by and seed it done; but howsever, wonders grows with acrons, and here be you a gwain to be made a fine Lady, and have all poor Miss Elinor's rooms, even

even to that hod little one as she liked so well, and I suppose I shall lose my place."

"If you had behaved well to Mr. Brown, perhaps you would not have wanted a place, Betty; for he, I assure you, will be taken care of by Colonel Buhannun's children."

"What, I suppose Miss, they'll allow him a crown a week, and sixpence for backee; but what's that? why not enough hardly to pay for my milk of roses."

"Then use water as I do, Betty."

"Not I Miss; for, besides that your face is as white as the driven snow, 'tis not genteel; but howsever, Miss Rosy, I suppose you must have a maid, as you are gwain to be a fine lady, and as that poor ignorant man, John Brown, said—let me see—something about prosperity breaking the bond of affliction;—and so I hope, Miss Rosy, as you'll speak to my lady, and let me stop;—though God he knows I live the life of a dog;—our Stuart is as grumpish as an old hound; and though he is a portly man, and with a power of money, I think myself as good as he—why not;—and I am sure when

John

John Brown had his two legs, and uft to have his hair plaster'd down his temples, and his cock'd hat, and cambric chitterlin, why he was no more to compare with him nor nothen ;—but my suffrens will never ind, that's a fure mark.”

Rofa had changed her drefs, without the leaft affiftance from Betty, during her unconnected harrangue, which fhe heard without hearing, her thoughts being full of anxious wonder refpecting John ;—“ I am really uneasy about your husband, Betty,—I think if he is alive—”

“ Lord, Mifs Rofy, how foon you be drefsed, and you look as nice as my nail ;—alive, Mifs ! yes, yes, I dare fay he is alive and merry ; give John Brown a pot of fine amber, a clean chitterlin, fpatterdashes, and that rigmirol old Shukspur, he never minded nothen about paying the brewer or diftiller.”

“ And who did mind it, Betty.”

“ Why Lord, Mifs, nobody, to be fure ! for I am fure I had no time.—But oh, geminig ! Mifs, do look out of this here winder ; what thing is that coming waddling along

along, with two servants after her? why I wish I may die if I don't believe it is my old Mistress Feversham; why, what can have brought her into these parts;—well, to be sure, she is in her element now; gaminigig, look at her feathers, and her long train, and see, if she has not got a smart body carrying her pacesoul—my stars! she moves like our goose after the goslings; well, I declare she looks monstrous credibility; I shall go and take notice on her, and ask her into the house-keeper's room, now our Stuart is so grumpish;”—and away ran Betty, while Mrs. Feversham bestowed on our heroine a sufficient number of nods and short bobbing courtesies, to intimate she was come to visit *her*.—So she descended time enough to apprise Lady Denningcourt, and witness the mortification of poor Betty, whose familiar address was answered with the most forbidding coldness, and whose invitation to the house-keeper's room, was not answered at all.

The lady was so over-dressed that, between the weight of a gold muslin, trimmed with Mechlin edging, spangled with gold,
and

and an immense plume of fine ostrich feathers, with a large bunch of artificial roses, and a wreath of the same round her trimmed hat, with other appendages totally unsuitable to the undress her fine lace morning cap affected, she really looked ready to sink with fatigue; when conducted by a servant, she entered where Lady Denningcourt and Rosa were sitting.

Rosa arose to introduce her to the Countess, but Mrs. Feverham chusing to introduce herself, she made a sliding courtesy, hoped her laship was well; threw herself on a sofa; took off her glove; shewed a white arm decorated with pearl bracelets, and fingers, where, as Betty said, prosperity had broken the bond of affliction, for they were decked with real diamonds, instead of doveys. This fair hand she extended to Rosa, with "how do, my dear—hoom—I am vastly glad to see you, as you may suppose from my taking this long walk, which has almost killed me—hoom!—to be sure I might have rode, but then exercise is so good
for

for me, I am always better after profuse perspiration—hoom !”

Rosa blushed for her fine acquaintance.

“ Well, I suppose you have heard how we go on ?”

“ No ;”—Rosa had only heard the marriage was broken off.

“ No ! what you don’t know then they are all off but poor Sol, and me, and the little priggish parson, and his insipid wife.”

“ Off !” repeated Lady Denningcourt.

“ Exactly so,” replied Mrs. Feversham, shrugging her shoulders ;—“ and that nasty woman, Mrs. Woudbe, she is finely done up too ; you must have heard of her.”

Rosa made an effort to speak, but the eagerness of the intended question prevented her utterance ; and Lady Denningcourt, who though ignorant of the motives, saw her impatience, answered for her,—that they were just returned from Edinburgh, and that having missed the Duke of Athelane, who went a different road, they were entirely ignorant of the cause that had prevented the splendid preparations

preparations of their neighbour being carried into effect.

The lady begged her la'ship's pardon ;— in her very delicate situation, her mind could not be quite collected, and poor Sir Sol continued so ill too ;—but the short and the long of the affair was just this,—hoom :— “ The Gauntlets were guilty of bad acts, very bad, in which they implicated poor Sir Sol ; he might be guilty, or he might not—that was not the question at present ;—but they had certainly tried to cheat him out of eighty thousand pounds ; being detected just at the moment, the poor despicable Earl rode post to Whitehaven, as they had since discovered, hired a collier to carry them to the continent, and sent for his family, who persuaded the dear disagreeable Miss Mushroom to leave poor Sir Sol in a dying state ;—and so they are all off.”

“ Good God !” exclaimed Rosa, with real concern, “ and the young ladies ! are they too gone in this collier ?”

“ O dear, no ! that nasty woman, Mrs. Woudbe, who, though quite done up, is gone

to patch up a story to her husband, took them with her."

"Is she really returned to her husband?"

"To be sure, my dear, where would you have her go? after the Irish fellow that cheated her of her jewels?"

"Irish fellow!" Rosa remembered, bad as Montreville was, he was the son of Magdalena.

"Ay, fellow!—my dear, how you colour; why you are not going to defend a common swindler—a cheat; why my dear, if he be caught and prosecuted he must be hanged, however it might affect Mrs. Woudbe's fine feelings."

"I hope not,"—and Rosa turned pale, "for his mother's sake;—what has he done? yet, what I already know is bad enough,"

"Do you know his mother, Rosa?" asked Lady Denningcourt.

Rosa wept.

"A mother!" exclaimed the visitor, "I never heard of her;—his father was, I find, originally an Irish attorney."

"Of whom are you speaking, madam?"

"Why

“ Why of Whittal ! to be sure,—an Irish relation of the mock Countess, whose father having left him all the secrets of the family, and, I am afraid, a few of my poor Sir Sol’s, he had the impudence and cleverness, for to do him justice he must have been clever, to pass himself on that nasty woman Mrs. Woudbe, aye, and half an hundred city tradesmen too, (so you know that put his cleverness past all doubt) for a charming young man, for whom I have always had a passion—I mean young Littleton, whom Sir Sol sent to India with your patron, and who is now the declared Earl of Gauntlet.”

“ And how did you hear all this ?” cried Rosa, her bosom panting, her cheeks glowing, and tears trembling in her eyes.

“ How did I hear it ! why I heard it from every body ; and what every body says must be true—*vox populi* is *vox Dei* ;—but indeed I read his whole last words and confession before he sailed for the colonies, in that letter you yourself gave into my hands, wherein he advised the nasty woman to be true to her dirty little husband, and gave her directions

where to get her diamonds, which, as he could not sell, he had only pawned."

Rosa was all agitation; she untied her black collar, rose up, sat down, sobbed, half-laughed, looked round for some friendly participator in the agonizing triumph of her soul, met the soft enquiring eye of Lady Denningcourt, flew into her arms and shed a torrent of tears in her bosom.

"My dear soul," cried the lady, whose name the reader will think rather doubtful, "this is too kind; you are over-joyed at my good fortune, and you have reason, though I shall chiefly live at Mushroom-place;—yet, your La'ship knows, there are certain things one must do,—such as being presented at Court, and seen there a drawing room day or two after,—and as I shall want a sort of smart useful companion, why I mean to take you, my dear."

"What madam!" answered Lady Denningcourt, wiping the tear of sympathy from her eye;—"You take Miss Walsingham to be your *your* useful companion?"

"Oh! I dare say your La'ship is surprised; but as to the dear disagreeable Mushrooms,

I suppose your La'ship knows there will be *two* of them; for Lord Lowder will bring an action, except Sir Sol comes down a second fortune, which I shan't advise him to do; I am vastly fond of them—at a distance—your La'ship comprehends me."

"You do my penetration too much honour, madam; but Miss Walsingham is totally unfit for the situation you propose."

"Your La'ship really thinks so;—Well, I am sure I am vastly obliged to you;—but my good wishes are the same. I believe she has rather a more haughty mind, than exactly suits her origin; but I am very fond of her, for all that."

"*At a distance*, madam, perhaps."

"Oh! no my lady, upon honour I was quite serious."

"My dear Mrs. Feversham!" cried Rosa, with a smile that displayed a thousand graces, "I know you are, and my obligation to you"

"Lady Mushroom, at your orders—bless me," looking at a watch, set round with brilliants, "I wonder my carriage is not

come; poor Sir Sol will really fret himself ill; he does not know where I am gone; but he will get used to that.—You look surprised, and as we are in a most beautiful, romantic situation, I declare I will have Mushroom-place taken entirely down, and rebuild it like this;—but more like the heroine of a romance than a novel, I will tell you my story in six words.”

Lady Mushroom's carriage was announced.

“ I am ready—well, then, my dear, you know I told you poor Sir Sol was extremely ill; and really, as I should have lost my pitiful annuity and the poor man was left by every body, I took all possible care of him, not at all conscious, that every pill, and every draught I gave him, was impregnated with love,—for you know that was the last thing one could have expected from a man with the gout in his stomach; he made the proposal, and I (here Lady Mushroom thought proper to put her spangled fan before her face) acceded.—The little priggish parson, and his poor pining quality spouse, were ashamed to
be

be seen; he had a special licence in his pocket, not filled up with the names of the bride and bridegroom; I got old Turgid to mention the matter; the parson demurred, but Turgid had been so abused by the Gauntlets and the dear disagreeable Mushroom, and the parson was in such distress for money, that we carried our point. Poor Sir Sol was supported on pillows, and I dare say was ready to expire with rapture, though he talked of revenge; however, whatever he felt, as he said he should die in peace, and as I knew I must live in splendour, why I make myself happy. Adieu, Miss; your La'ship's most obedient—my carriage—!”

“What a woman!” exclaimed Lady Denningcourt.

“Oh my dearest madam,” cried Rosa, bursting into fresh tears, while joy beamed from every feature, “What a man!”

“Who, my love?”

“This friend of my first benefactor; this son of the long suffering Magdalena; this—oh forgive and pity me, this idol of the poor Beggar's heart.”

The explanations which followed the tender confessions, were such as increased the interest of the Countess in her protégée; but no step could be delicately taken, to prove her recantation of error, either to the young man, or his mother.

Rosa shewed her patroness the note Magdalena had sent her; and it was known that Delworth was now the property of the right owner; the servants were not, indeed, yet displaced; but as the Grange steward was already arrived, and taking account of every thing, and as Rosa had given her address to Magdalena, Lady Denningcourt thought the matter must rest, as far as related to her, in its present state; "It will not, however, be amiss," she continued, "to keep up an intercourse with Mrs. FEVERSHAM; and oh," she cried, "how incredible should I have thought it, that I ever could love a Countess of Denningcourt, as I do, and shall love you."

The afternoon (oh what an afternoon was this to Rosa!) was passed by the Countess in her boudoir, writing letters to the Duke, and to her daughter, and Doctor Croak,
inclosed

inclosed in one to her agent in London, and one also, which she did not mention to Rosa, reminding Magdalena of their meeting at Florence, and inviting her and her family to Denningcourt; and afterwards they rambled to the village, and visited those benevolent foundations, which had filled Rosa's heart with veneration for the Countess's character, before she knew her person.

"Oh!" cried Rosa, sighing, as she watched the receding rays of the setting sun empurpling the turrets of Denningcourt castle, "Oh that the wretched inmate of that venerable building——."

"Do you mean Lord Denningcourt's mistress?—she is gone, she has left him; and though he did not appear to care about her when she was with him, my house-keeper tells me he set off to Scotland after her, like a distracted man, this morning; 'tis a strange story she tells me; he pretends to be jealous of Duke Athelane; and indeed she says M'Lane certainly did often go to the castle; but I know my uncle."

"Dear Lady Denningcourt, and so do I; what a succession of joyful surprises succeed

my transient sorrows; so transient, I have almost forgot them. The Duke has, I doubt not, taken her away. Oh she was such a beautiful girl! and her father so loved her; and though he did not shew it so much, admired her too."

Lady Denningcourt wished she had known this, before her letter to the Duke was sent off, but would write the next post: "something," said she, "it strikes me, I may do, for a family to whose most valuable branch I have been so disastrous."

"Oh gemminigig," cried Betty, when Rosa was going to bed, "Miss Rosy, was you ever so dumb-founded in your life, as at sight of Madam Feversham made Lady Mushroom? our stuart has been up to Delworth this evening, gitt out of a bit of kurofity, and there they say she do top it most finely; and Sir Solomon, an ould rogue; I am sure, if it had not have been for he, I mought have had a ouse of my own to this day; but God a-mighty pays debts athout money; howsever, he can't stand hand nor foot;

foot; and after all the doctor thinks as it's a moat pint whether he lives or dies. Lord a massy only think, if he shoud die out right, and she have all his money; gemminigig, how my head do turn round with other people's luck; God he knows I was born under a three-penny planet, never to be wuth a groat; for what do you think my lady said?—why she said, ses she, if Elinor chuses to have you Brown, I expect you will be appy to attend her; and I am sure I shant be appy at no such thing; if not, if Miss Walsingham chuses to keep you, you will, I ope, be sensible of the honor;—Lord, Miss Rosy, I could arldy help lasen in her face; howsever, if I do go among them Croaks again, they'll find me a crabbed stick, I can tell them that."

"Very well," replied Rosa, smiling.

"Why, Lord, Miss! what is come to you? why the turn of a straw t'other day set you a-crying, and now a straw without turning sets you a-lasen; but they may las that wins—my sufferens are without ind, I know that.—But pray, Miss, how do you
O 6 like

like that tall ould Scotswoman, as my lady is so fond on?"

"Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin;—oh, she is a charming, good creature!"

"Well, Miss, I don't think much amiss on her—only she is a little kurous; she asked me so many questions about you, that I was so hampered, as I always ham, when I got any thing to keep secret, that I told her all your whole story in the park just now, and Lord, she cried as if one had stuck her with a knife; and when I told her what a piece of work I had to get you clean, and how poor John Brown—well, he was a good-natured soul, give the devil his due—would not let us rub that nasty mark off your side with a round towel, well, to be sure, I I thoht as she would a sounded at that, and, poor soul, she ses she'd give the world to see it; bur, as I say, that's all nonsense.—Good night, Miss Rosy."

The next morning Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin entered the room, with Mrs. Brown, before Rosa was up.

Trothe,

“Trothe, Mefs,” said the good woman, “ai cannae tele hoo daft ai am; but gin ye wull just lete me luke et the merke the gude weef speer’d just by your herte, ye sal note ken hoo mickle ye sal sarve me? I hanna claisted mine een aw neight aboot it.”

Rosa smiled and blushed: she was a stranger to the naked freedoms some modest ladies do not withhold from the world, much less each other. The Tyrian marble was not more smooth than her polished neck, nor that of the Grecian Venus more finely formed. It was impossible, in a liberal age, where samples are allowed to the sight of the amorous chapmen of those charms which marriage only can authorise them to touch, that she could be unconscious of her own superior beauty; but so truly did modesty blend her soft influence with that consciousness, that while a white dress was thrown over her neck, it was with reluctance she permitted Mrs. Moggy M’Laurin to examine, with her spectacles, the blue mark which had heretofore so puzzled Colonel Buhanun’s kitchen committee.

Mrs.

Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin's examination lasted a most unreasonable length of time; her spectacles several times became misty; they were taken off, wiped, and often replaced, before Rosa felt a succession of warm drops fall from the inspector's eyes on the little mark under her heart.

"What is the matter, my good Mrs. M'Laurin? do I bear the same mark with any one dear to you? have you ever lost a child or grand-child with such a mark?"

"The Lorde's wull be done!" cried Mrs. Moggy, casting up her eyes and hands.

"Amen!" cried Rosa.

"Amen! pray God!" echoed Betty—"for what can't be cured must be endured."

Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin sat on an arm-chair by the bed-side, with her eyes fixed on Rosa through her spectacles, save only when they were taken off to be wiped, observing a profound silence till she went to her dressing-room, whither she also followed, and where she remained, without speaking, till Rosa was ready to leave it, when she complained of

of a most violent head-ache, and went to bed.

Lady Denningcourt wrote this day again to the Duke of Athelane, and also returned Lady Mushroom's visit without Rosa.

Lady Mushroom's brain was a perfect eddy before this honour, of which she did not fail to make the most; and though the Countess behaved with remarkable affability to Lady Louisa Brudenel, Lady Mushroom was so very good as to expatiate, in a whisper, on the advantage of character. "You see," she added, "how it is—poor Sir Solomon and myself are only a sort of interlopers, yet *I* am visited."

Lady Louisa, dejected and spirit-broken, urged Mr. Brudenel to return to London, when Sir Solomon gave him a fifty pound note, and his lady a fine diamond ring as a douceur for performing the ceremony; but poor Mr. Brudenel, who having reckoned on sharing some part of the eighty thousand pounds, had promised to discharge certain pecuniary obligations, was really afraid to return. Lady Denningcourt saw the spiritless despondence

despondence of the wife, and the settled gloom of the husband. Lady Mushroom had given a key to both: and the Countess could not help feeling the miserable indelicacy of the unhappy pair waiting to be turned out of what Lady Louisa was born to consider as her father's mansion; she with difficulty repressed the tear of sensibility, while Lady Mushroom was blessing herself, that as poor Sir Solomon could not be moved, but at cost of his life, the young Lord must know she could have no hand in poor Sir Solomon's wickedness.

Mr. Brudenel and Lady Louisa at length, lacerated with internal anguish, left the apartment.

"Poor things!" exclaimed Lady Mushroom, "I don't know what will become of them."

Lady Denningcourt, who but to hear if any thing interesting to Rosa transpired, would have thought as little of visiting her new ladyship as the former mistress of the mansion, took her leave; and Lady Mushroom was in too great a hurry to announce the

the honour done her by her visitor to poor Sir Solomon, to notice that the Countess's carriage proceeded empty, and that she walked from the house with the Brudenels. Mr. Brudenel's was not only a gentleman's, but a sacred profession; and Lady Denningcourt considered the cause of religion as suffering, when its ministers were reduced to be objects of derision or contempt. Mr. Brudenel was no longer so; he handed her to her carriage, while Lady Louisa supported herself, overcome with emotion, against a tree. The Countess drove off, and the altered pair returned to the house, put their things together with alacrity, and began their journey to London, without fear of molestation when they arrived there.

CHAP. VIII.

*A short Chapter, containing the Rejection of a Lover,
the complaints of a Wife, and the Tables
turned on Mrs. Brown.*

THE first person Lady Denningcourt saw, after her return from Delworth, was Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin with a handkerchief bound round her head; her ruddy cheeks tinged with a light purple, and her eyes sore with weeping.

"My dear M'Laurin, are you ill," cried the Countess, "what shall I do for you?"

"Trothe ai'll tele ye, my lady, ye mun fend me to the sooth, ai'll be shoore to coom bauck en a wee bet."

"To

“ To the south ; why what would you do there ? ”

“ Tes nae metter, ai mun gang.”

“ But consider, dear Moggy, though you are hearty among your friends, you are too old to take a long journey alone.”

“ Ai caunna be too eild, tull sarve Gode an my frinds.”

“ But what business ? ”

“ Tes a coonsel I caunna deefclose.”

“ This is the strangest whim ; if you are weary of staying with me, go home.”

“ Ah my lady, you dinna ken ; I caunna reffe neet nor day, sae mun gang sooth an ai weer tull dee.”

“ Think of it to-morrow.”

To-morrow came, Mrs. Moggy bound a second handkerchief round her head ; a darker purple tinged her cheek ; her eyes were more swollen, and her whim, like most old women's whims, strengthened by opposition ; to the south she would go ; and at length, accompanied by the house steward, to the south she went, promising “ to be shoore tull coom bauck en a wee bet.”

The

The attachment of Lady Denningcourt to her young and now only companion, acquired every hour a more endearing character:—besides the resemblance so dear to memory, there was a modest rectitude of mind, a suavity of manners, a grace of speech, and an unremitting desire to please in Rosa, that could not fail of improving the partiality of such a mind as that of her present protectress.

Rosa, on her part, found the maternal solicitude she had experienced from Mrs. Harley, and which she valued as the dearest of blessings, even increased, in Lady Denningcourt; and it excited that only return of affectionate gratitude, which *owing* owes *not*; and thus so happily disposed towards each other, in the full enjoyment of splendid affluence; and possessing that sense of the blessings of providence, “which leaving nothing to ask, could only be incessantly thanked,” Lady Denningcourt and her protégée must have been completely happy, but——

“ Oh

“ Oh that eternal *but* ; that cruel, never-conquered last head of the hydra of human infirmity !—*but* the good, the amiable Lady Denningcourt, had found in the dear and unhopèd maternal tie, which she considered as a blessing of the first magnitude, a source of uneasiness which called for all her fortitude to combat, without a hope of subduing ; and there were many, very many moments, when Rosa’s heart detached itself from every present blessing, and when fancy would wander to the residence of the beloved Magdalena, and figure the mortification of her son, at the determined coldness which had so visibly distressed his mother ; and when bewildered in uncertainty, now elated with bashful hope, now depressed by fear, she gave herself up to that soft melancholy, “ which is ever the forerunner of pleasure.”

An enormous and interesting packet, which arrived from Duke Athelane, occupied them a whole day in reading and answering.

The Duke regretted that conduct in Elinor, which a close observation on her lucid intervals, had, in some degree, prepared him
to

to expect; and approved of the plan of conduct the Countess had adopted towards her:

“Not all the blood of all the Howards,”

could, he was now convinced, enoble the foul; and the comparative merits of the two young friends at the Jointure-house, had been to him a lesson of humility in respect to blood, he believed he should be the better for, as long as he had power to make any distinctions at all;—he pleaded guilty in respect to the depriving Lord Denningcourt of his mistress—that Lord, who, like Pocuscurante, was one of those prodigious geniuses, whom nothing in his possession could please, was now in the neighbourhood of Athelane, with Lord Aaron Horsenagot his first introducer to the Buhanuns, threatening destruction to himself and all mankind, if he could not recover a jewel, whose lustre possession obscured:—but the Duke continued, “if ever he receives her again, it must be as a bride from my hands.”—the remaining part of the packet more particularly concerned our heroine.

Mr.

Mr. Angus, immediately on his coming from Caithness to Athelane, to pay his respects to the Duke, declared his passion for Rosa, and solicited permission to make her honourable proposals.

The Duke was astonished; he had never understood Rosa was known to, much less beloved by, his nephew:—he expressed himself with some asperity on the occasion, both in regard to Mr. Angus, and the fair object of his admiration; to exonerate her, a letter from Doctor Cameron was produced, acquainting Mr. Angus, not only with the situation, but sentiments of Rosa: and as the Duke readily adopted his nephew's sanguine opinion, that her rejection of his passion proceeded from a delicate respect to his family, it restored her to his esteem, but left him exceedingly embarrassed in regard to his nephew.

Indeed, had Rosa been in any other protection than his own family, it is probable the young gentleman would have made his first proposals to herself; but the propriety and delicacy of her sentiments, which the doctor

doctor insisted were even improved, though, when she had first left Edinburgh he thought that impossible, ascertained that the most honourable mode would also be the most politic; accordingly he openly avowed his attachment, and his passion had the more formidable an appearance, as it had been nourished with undeviating constancy, when hope was almost extinct.

Miss Angus, after the first surprise, frankly approved his choice; while Miss Bruce, who had already taken care to inform him, that his uncle had destined him for a mad wife, heard with dismay and astonishment, not only that the enchanting Walsingham was adored by him she chose to adore herself, but that she was, in fact, the identical little Beggar, of whom every body had heard so much, and knew so little.

The poor disappointed lady took fits on the occasion, of two sorts; first she shriek'd, kick'd, scratch'd and bit herself, and every body else; then she talked her hearers into the vapours, about the terrible disgrace an alliance so degrading, must entail on the house

of Athelane; whispering even to the servants, that the honourable Mrs. Angus was going to make a beggarly and spurious descendant of the Buhanun's, future Duchefs of Athelane.

This secret was of a complexion to irritate every collateral branch of the family, and remonstrances were made in form to the Duke, by the friends of all the young unmarried ladies of the whole clan, against so unheard of a disgrace.

Had the whole female creation been submitted to his grace, to select a bride for his heir, the solemn approbation of his own heart would have rested on Rosa; but the *who*, and *what*, of so much and grand importance among the old Scotch nobility, were considerations of such terrific magnitude, as at least made him hesitate; and after forever discarding the incendiary, Miss Bruce, he extorted a promise from his nephew, to allow him a month for consideration, before he took any step in the business, and then wrote a statement of particulars to Lady Denningcourt, requesting her serious opinion of a

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business of so much consequence to the family.

“ Ah !” said Lady Denningcourt, after reading the Duke’s long letter to Rosa, “ this is a sort of toil my uncle spreads for *me* ; he wishes, I see, to justify his excessive partiality for you, by my example, and I should certainly fall into it ; but you, Rosa, are not, I fear, disposed to prove the triumph of humble virtue and extraordinary beauty, over noble blood and clanish tenacity.—I must, however, answer the letter ;—what shall I say for you ?”

“ Say, my dear Countess,” replied Rosa, “ all that respectful gratitude ——”

“ But what in respect to the finest young man in Scotland ? what of your heart ?”

“ Oh, madam !” and Rosa deeply blushed.

“ Ah’s and oh’s are awkward interjections in certain cases, my sweet Rosa ; again I ask, what says your heart to Mr. Angus, with a fine fortune in possession, and the ducal honours and estate in reversion ?”

“ I am worthy of neither.”

"You are not allowed to judge of that;—it is your heart I would speak to."

"Well then, my heart—is a lost one."

"And you do not wish to recal it?"

"Oh no.—"

"Oh! again. Well, retire to your boudoir, as I will to mine; write the Duke on common subjects, such as Magdalena's history, which you tell so prettily—that will make him sad; then give him our bride Lady Mushroom's—that, if any thing can, will make him smile. Rosa, you do not perceive, what is very clear to me, that, after all this solemn statement, the Duke's heart is set on seeing you the wife of Angus: that heart of his, Rosa, is a noble one, and is, in all its regards to God and man, exactly what a chieftan of the first Caledonian family should be;—but go to your boudoir—I am to be explicit?"

"Perfectly."

"And your heart is certainly a lost one?"

Rosa blushed an affirmative.

"And you have no ambition?—you will only be a Countess?—Go, go, Lady Gaunt-

let—the lady Lady Gauntlet that *was*, could have taught you better.”

The answers dispatched to Athelane, the fair Dowager at the Jointure-house, and her protégée, might have been in the state of angels; *but*—again, and for ever, there must be a but against perfect happiness :

“ Man never is, but always to be blest.”

No letter had yet arrived from Magdalena, nor from Elinor; and constant expectation of the post, with the successive disappointments, would have broke in a little on the pleasure, not less grateful to Rosa than her protectress, of repeating over and over, every anecdote she could remember or Betty remind her, of Colonel Buhanun, which, though a tale told so many times, was never tedious;—as to the reading the letters she had received from him, and bathing every character with tears, that was a luxury Lady Denningcourt was even avaricious of, and she had taken them into her own possession for that purpose.

Lady

Lady Mushroom was in the habit of paying them flying visits, when any thing new occurred at Denningcourt. Miss Mushroom had wrote a penitential letter to poor Sir Sol, which he refused to open; the house-keeper and butler at Delworth had received notice to quit; but as all the rest of the servants yet remained, and no particular notice had been taken about poor Sir Sol, who was again in a dangerous state, she had no thought of removing; till one morning she was announced, just as Rosa was sitting down to her harp, and before Lady Denningcourt had left her chamber.

“My dear creature,” she cried, “do you know that I am the most miserable creature in the world? not excepting poor Sir Sol. I should have sent my P. P. C. but have fifty thousand things to say. Half a dozen people came to Delworth last night; a little ugly dark woman among them, who, in a language which I had difficulty to comprehend, abused poor Sir Sol, and actually threatened to have him thrown upon a dunghill. Now, though I dare say he deserves it, as between
P 3 ourselves,

ourselves, he is a sad wicked old man, one must not, for ones own credit, suffer him to be ill used; so I sent his valet and Mrs. Persian, whom as she dresses hair and puts on *rouge* so vastly well I have made my own woman, about to find accommodation, at any price, suitable to our rank; but, if you will believe me, my dear, the brutes at all the inns within ten miles round refused to take us in;—so, as the man, who came with the little ugly foreigner said, he was sure his lady would not be the death of her greatest enemy, and as I have always had a passion for that fine interesting creature, the rightful Lord Gauntlet, who knows I was no party in poor Sir Sol's iniquity, and as it is really a pleasant thing to see right take place, I should have made myself easy;—but, poor Sir Sol is really as obstinate as wicked, and had rather *almost* die—not quite—he would be sorry to do that, I believe—than face either mother or son of these Gauntlets;—so, my dear, I am vastly sorry to leave you, indeed I am also half sorry I married this old wicked Sir Sol;—in London, nobody

minds

minds any thing of the kind; if people have money and live in style, they may be as wicked as they please, without inconvenience; but here in the country, when one hears all sorts of people ready to worship Lady Denningcourt in the same breath that they curse Lady Gauntlet and my poor wicked Sir Sol, one really gets out of conceit with bad people; and then, if I were not Lady Mushroom, I dare say your Countess would have invited me to stay the summer with you, instead of begging to be taken in at paltry inns."

Lady Mushroom actually wept at the conclusion of this speech; and Rosa, who was by this time pretty well acquainted with her good and bad qualities, tried to console her, by reverting to the many advantages of her situation.

"All stuff! my dear," interrupted Lady Mushroom;—"to be sure, I have been cutting down and letting out heaps of fine dresses, made for that tall May-pole, the dear, disagreeable Mushroom; but as I was unfolding the prettiest silver muslin I ever beheld—here it is—(throwing a parcel on the
P 4 sofa)

sofa)—I found a paper, on which was wrote
'A gala dress for my sweet child, my Rosa;'
so that evidently belongs to you;—and now
I shall be afraid to put on an article, least it
should be the right of some wrong'd widow
or orphan, and so include me in the curses on
the injustice of poor Sir Sol. Well, my dear,
God bless you! I should have been vastly
glad to have you with me, if you had been
fit for my place, which the Countess assured
me you was not. I am sure I wish I was in
yours with all my heart and soul;—but adieu!
I must go and take care of poor wicked Sir
Sol.—we cannot be taken in nearer than
sixteen miles."

Rosa attended her to her carriage, and
assured her of the Countess's good wishes,
as well as her own; lamented she could not
solicit an invitation for her to the Jointure-
house, as wife to so bad a man; but if
ever——"

"Oh, my dear!" cried Lady Mushroom,
bursting into tears, "you can't think what a
good man my Mr. Feversham was—every
body

body was civil to me on his account. Oh, Lord ! I wish I was a widow again."

The carriage drove off with this most common wish ; and Rosa finding the Countess was in her boudoir, went thither to acquaint her with the motive of Mrs. Feversham's early visit.

She found her with a letter in her hand; on which her tears dropped in rapid succession; and this ceased to surprise Rosa, when she saw it came from Elinor. The Countess gave it her to read, and shed a fresh flood of tears.

The letter was a mixture of regret and self-acquittal for the step she had taken, which she attributed to the being deceived in respect to young Croak's situation, after she was separated from him by the Duke; for, instead of being well and happy, as even Rosa assured her, he was in prison, breaking his heart.

She was very sorry to have vexed Lady Denningcourt, but it was the only way to make her easy in the end, for she never could have been at home among people of quality;

and really believed, if Jack had not taken her away, she should have been as bad as ever among the lords and ladies at Lady Hopely's, whose names she never could remember; as to the Duke, she never looked at him without trembling; and as to Doctor Croak, she should never be able to abide him, for his cruelty to Jack; though, as he was growing old and poor, they intended to allow him a maintenance.

They were now with their uncle, the farmer doctor; where, as it was harvest time, they were all very busy; and as he had been so good to her dear Jack, she hoped her dear ladyship, whom she could not dare to call mother, would not be angry, if, out of the much too liberal allowance she proposed, they bought the farm he rented, and gave it to him; and indeed, as Jack hated idleness, she believed he would go partners with his uncle.

She sent her love to dear Rosa, whom she should always love better than any body in the world, except Jack, and whom, if she had not been deceived by her, Elinor would never have

have left, but who was, notwithstanding, much fitter to live with a Countess than herself.

As to Betty Brown, she had learned to be so fine a lady, she would be quite troublesome in a farm-house, where there was no milk of roses; so as Jack had got a handy girl to wait on her, she hoped Rosa would keep poor Betty. She concluded with thanks and obedience, &c.

“You see,” said the amiable Countess, “not only my peace, but my child’s happiness, depends on my leaving her in that rank where my angry father placed her. Nothing, as the Duke writes, can ennoble a plebeian soul; but my child is the only instance I ever knew of real good principles and integrity of heart, on which confidence and indulgence could make no impression; and I am equally surprised that, at the same school, with the same advantages, she is in every respect so much your inferior.”

“But, madam,” cried Rosa, “I had no home to forget with more celerity than I learned—no fond friend to indulge, to flatter—”

“To ruin you—happy girl! But the natural bias of your heart must have been the delicate refinements of virtue and honour; from them sprung the avidity after instruction and that emulation of excelling, which could alone make you what you are;—but my poor girl must buy the farm for this uncle, and then I think I must leave her to get in her harvest. Ah, Rosa! pity a mother of my rank, whose only child must move among the vulgar.”

Rosa could offer no alleviation of so certain and irremediable an evil; she could only endeavour to amuse the mind on which it was inflicted, and immediately repeated what had passed at Lady Mushroom’s visit.

“Poor woman!” said Lady Denningcourt—“she will find her lettings-out and cuttings down no relief against the misery of living with her poor Sir Sol;—but there are servants arrived at Delworth, and yet, I do not understand it—”

Lady Denningcourt’s wonder alluded to the letter she had written to Magdalena, which yet remained unanswered; but as that was a circumstance

circumstance of which Rosa was ignorant, *she* thought only of the important approaching era, which she wished, yet dreaded to arrive.

It was still the Countess's custom to make her promenade round her poor at Denningcourt; the evening was remarkably fine, and as old Dido was always the feeble attendant of Rosa, as well as now a great favourite of the Countess, Betty generally followed the ladies, in order, as Dido knew her better than the footmen, that she might be taken more care of.

They made all the usual charitable visits, and were going to cross the road from the village to the park, when a post chaise and four, with the horses and drivers all decorated with blue ribbands, passed, and after turning a little way up the avenue leading to the Jointure-house, stopped.

Lady Denningcourt could neither account for the appearance, nor guess at the business that should carry so strange an equipage to the Jointure-house; and the person who alighted from it and now approached, threw not any light on the subject.

It

It was John Brown: but so unlike the John Brown who left the Jointure-house, a few weeks since, that even Rosa did not at first know him.

He had on a new suit of cloaths, of the colour of his old master's livery, but made plain without cuffs, collar or livery lace; his hair was cut *à la militaire*, and plastered to his temples with pomatum and powder; his three cocked military hat with gold lace and stiff cockade, was put on one side his head; his cambrick plaited chitterlin stood out some inches from his bosom, and he wore a snow white spaterdash on each leg, which however did not conceal the heavy silver buckles on a pair of well japanned shoes; he flourished an handsome cane, and saluting the Countess with an open palm against his hat, after twirling one of his legs, and flourishing his stick, as he glanced at Betty, in advancing, took off his hat and offered a letter to Rosa.

"Oh my gracious goodness!" cried Betty, "if here ben't John Brown again, with good cloaths on his back, and two legs; well, if

I did not say it was an imp in his likeness that comed in a shabby coat and one leg."

"Go thy way, woman," quoth John, with a most immoderate flourish of cane and arms,

"That man in the world who shall report he has

"A better wife, let him in nought be trusted

"For speaking false in that——"

Thou art above the desert of poor John Brown."

The only probable guess Rosa could hit on was, that John, having discovered the Colonel's fortune for his heirs, had brought a letter to her from Doctor Cameron, which his honest pride, wounded as it had been by his wife, induced him to deliver in this pompous manner. Smiling at his simple resentment, she received the letter without taking her eyes from the honest bearer, but it had attracted the regard of one whose eyes had no other employment at that moment.

"My master, madam," said John, raising himself into a perpendicular elevated posture, and pulling out his chitterlin; "My master,
my

my Colonel that *was*, madam, General Buhannun, that by the honour and glory of the King now is, madam, Oh! Miss Rosa, Miss Rosa," bursting into tears, "my master, my blessed master is alive! and will be with you to-morrow."

The astonishment—the joy—the almost incredulous joy of Rosa, was absorbed in concern for the Countess, who sunk motionless and senseless on the ground.—While Betty, on whose ears the welcome sound still rung, cried out, making a motion toward friendly greeting, which John disdainfully repelled,—“Oh gracious me! is he indeed; well, well, when things be at the worst they must mend. Oh dear, oh dear! who'd have thought my sufferens was so near an ind? and if I did not tell our ouse-keeper as I dreamed of Pharaoh's fat kind and lean kind.”

The villagers were now thronging round their loved benefactress; the white hairs of the aged shook, the tears of the middle-aged fell, and the children crept together in dismal groups, when they saw the deathly pale countenance and lifeless form of their com-

mon

mon mother carried into the nearest cottage.—

The doctor of the village, an honest, skilful, but before his misfortunes were known to the Countess, distressed man, was called; he approached her trembling—he saw the soul of benevolence was in danger of for ever quitting its mild abode; worlds would he have given, that a more skilful and less interested person was near:—It was necessary to bleed her instantly; while this operation was performing, another carriage was heard rattling through the village towards the Join-ture-house;—the crowd attracted curiosity; on being asked why they were collected with such mournful and anxious looks round the cottage,—“It is our benefactress,—it is her who visits the sick,—who clothes the poor,—who is the mother of deserted infants,—it is the good Countess of Denningcourt, who was carried into the cottage dying,” they replied.—

“Merciful God!” cried a female voice;—the carriage door was opened, the crowd made way, and Rosa, who supported her
beloved

beloved patroness, turning her streaming eyes from the flow-dropping blood, which, after cutting both arms and feet, followed the lancet into the warm water in which the latter were immersed, saw Magdalena.

"Oh madam!" exclaimed Rosa, "behold your preserver and my benefactress; she dies, we lose her for ever, at the moment when her sorrows only should expire."

Magdalena's fine majestic form inspired respect; that respect increased, when on the information of her servants it was known that she was the injured mother of the young Earl who was expected at Delworth, and whom report announced so different from the usurper; she perceived the drops which fell faster from the operator's eyes than blood from the orifices, and her own tears washed the lifeless hand she press'd to her lips.

Such had been the consternation, nobody thought of sending to the Jointure-house for a carriage. The only rational being in the group was Mrs. Brown, who amid the wreck of matter and crush of worlds, would have only thought on self, dear, dear self; what she

she was saying to John, and his answers, is the episode to the tragedy in the cottage;—and as the author has a vast deal of business on her hand, she must put the Countess, who, to the unspeakable joy of her poor neighbours began to revive, into the stranger's carriage, carry her home, and lay her on her own bed at the Jointure-house; where also we must know, Magdalena would speak in the animated language of truth, her grateful recollections of the obligation she was under to the Countess and her late father, as soon as she was able to bear it, but that was not just yet.

“John,” cried Betty, following her husband and such of the crowd who presumed to attend the carriage within the gates of the park, “Laws! how fast you do walk, John.”—

John flourished away,

“You may as well stand on the beach

“And bid the main flood bate his usual height,”

“As talk to me, Betty; my yellow face makes you sick.”

"But is our master come home, indeed, and indeed, John Brown?—make *me* sick! Laws, John!"

"Peace, woman!" roared John,

"——— I never heard yet

"That any of the bolder vices wanted

"Less impudence to gainsay what they did,

"Than to perform it at first."

Oh woman,

———"It was cruelty

"To load a fallen man."

"I load you, John! why, where did you fall?—Laws, how can you talk so, when Miss Rosy herself knows I did nothen but cry and fret."—

"What! because I was *not* dead? because I stood betwixt thee and a mountain of flesh?"

"Oh dear John! will my sufferens never ind?—Here Miss Rosa will be happy, my master will be happy, and every body but poor me!—me who have had so much sickness and fretten! me who was left to be put upon by every body, and never so much as got a letter."

"Oh

“ Oh what authority and shew of truth

“ Can cunning sin cover itself withal.”

“ Nay hang not upon me,

“ Thy blush is guiltiness, not modesty,”

and thou thinkest

“ A man's soul is in his cloaths.”

“ As to modesty, John, I am sure nobody can't say any thing to disparage me in that ; and I am sure, if I had been false-hearted to you, I would not never have given no consent but in the way of marriage ;—and our Stuart was a portly man; and wuth a power of money.” Before Betty finished this harangue, John was flung off, and the Lady laid on her bed.

If Rosa was transported with joy ; if she beheld unutterable meaning in the fine eyes of the beloved solitaire of the Burn-side ; if she read in the short affectionate letter John delivered to her from her patron, an end of all her sorrows, and a happy presage, that her humble birth would be the only disadvantage under which she would enter the noble

noble family so flatteringly anxious to receive her ; and, if above all, she anticipated the avowal of those glowing sentiments of tenderness, that had imperceptibly stolen from the passionate heart of the amiable Horace into her own, she was not less interested for Lady Denningcourt ; not less affected by her situation, nor less anxious to relieve the tender embarrassment of her soul.

Magdalena's mind had acquired strength from misfortune ; an adept in the school of experience, her studies at the Burn-side had been animated by feeling, and corrected by judgment ;—it is true it was not from what men are, but what they should be, that she would have wished to judge the world, had she not been so deeply wounded by it. She was ignorant of the part of Lady Denningcourt's history which her situation and exclamations now explained, but instead of weeping over her, she took in at once all the delicacies of her situation, and entered into them with the more warmth as these in some points were of equal concern to her beloved Rosa.

Not

Not to enter into the peculiar and interesting point of view, in which General Buhannun and Lady Denningcourt stood to each other, their child was the just heir to that fortune, she knew he had, with generous pleasure, appropriated to Rosa as a marriage portion; nor did his generosity or pleasure exceed that with which she knew her son would relinquish it: But there is a manner of doing every thing, which sensible minds only can distinguish; and several minutias of the arrangements necessary to be formed were of a nature that must pain, and perhaps a little humble Rosa; she therefore, after whispering the Countess, begged Rosa to leave her protectress and her to settle some particular points by themselves.

Rosa, aware of the extreme delicacy of Lady Denningcourt's situation in respect to the General, and certain that Lady Gauntlet was competent both to console and advise, gladly obeyed her.

On retiring to her own chamber, she found Betty, who declared John had behaved
fo

so ill to her, she had cried a whole quarter of an hour.

Rosa desired she would send him to her boudoir, and hastened thither to meet him.

John Brown had conceived a strong antipathy to the fat steward, and extended a certain part of that antipathy to all the domestics of the Jointure-house; his directions from his master were, after delivering the letter to Rosa, to take her orders, and then proceed to Delworth.

As he had not yet received these orders, he was in waiting in the court yard, with his chaise and horses, declining, with coldness, every invitation into the house, when Betty desired him to follow her to Miss Rosy.

John obeyed without speaking.

"Dear Mr. Brown," cried Rosa, "what happy tidings have you brought me."

"Why, Miss Rosy," cried John,

"Friendship is constant in all other things,

"Save in the office and affairs of ———"

John

John stopped, and cast an indignant glance at Betty. "So, Miss, as

"Grief is proud, and makes his owner stout,"

I could not bear to go to Scotland, nor could I bear to stop here; and as the world is

"A stage, where every man must play his part,

"And mine's a sad one,"

and as

"There is a special Providence in the fall of a sparrow,"

I thought I could job a bit here and job a bit there, in my way back to London; and as I was sure *you* did not want such a friend as poor John Brown, the yellow faced cripple, (again Betty had an angry glance) why I resolved to inquire at all the places where I knew my master had property, and so send you the particulars, but never make folks sick again."

John's eyes watered, and he drew a fine India handkerchief from his pocket to dry them.

"Lord John!" cried Betty, "what a nice shawl that handkerchief would make—did my master give it to you?"

John did not answer.

"But I long to hear every particular about my dear patron—how was he preserved? why had we no letters? how does he look? is he well?——"

"Why, *madam!*"

"*Madam*, John! why not address me as you were used to do?"

"Why *madam!* because you are a *lady*, and will be a lady; and tho'

"——— Pride hath no other glass

"To shew itself but pride—for supple knees

"Feed arrogance, and are the proud man's fee,"

yet it is fit you should be respected; which is not the less your due, because

"You win straying souls with modesty,
and because

"It is the witness still of excellency

"To put a strange face on its own perfection."

"There,

"There John!" cried Betty, "you see your own books bid you not put no strange faces on your own——"

"But your master, dear John?" said Rosa, impatiently.

"And *my* master, dear John," cried Betty, making another vain attempt to insinuate her hand between his arm and body.

"Oh, what a master!"—and John wiped his eyes with the *nice shawl*.

"But Lord, John! he is no more dead nor yourself; so it don't signify nothen to keep repeating old grievances; and I am sure his sufferens from the salvages han't been no more nor mine;—for to think of my gwain to live with that family of the Croaks, as knows nothen genteel."

"You may live where you please, Mrs. Brown."

"Oh, no, my dear John, it shall be where *you* please;—I am sure I always gives up to *you*—only I hope it will be in a comfortable, genteel seteeation, and not among riff raff, that's all I want; for nobody can say as I am proud. But I hope you did not never men-

tion no word to my master about frightening me with that nonsense about that nasty wooden leg—I am sure I am monstercious glad you han't not got it in right earnest."

"But I *have* got it," cried John, impatiently, and springing up a cork leg—"only too like your hard heart, well covered;—so you see,

"The world is still deceived with ornament;

"The seeming truth, which cunning time puts on,

"Is to entrap the wisest."

"My gracious goodness! (Betty had already discarded *our Stuart's geminigig*) is that a nartifical leg? why 'tis almost as and-some as the natural one."

Rosa wished Betty would give her husband leave to talk a little about his master.

"Mum!" cried Betty—"I am sure I have not spoke three words."

"Why, *madam*, (and John bowed) there's no such thing as true courage in that Tippoo, though he is a sort of a king;

"For that which we in mean men entitle patience,

"Is pale cowardice in nobler breasts."

But

But no nobility belongs to him: he did not use my master in a soldier-like manner; for after two of his soldiers saw him fall, and thinking, as he commanded the fortie he would be a prize, carried him to Tippoo's first officer, what does he but sends him with the wounded men of their own army, to some of the distant forts, where my poor master—"

John again wiped his eyes.

"Do, John," cried Betty, "let me fetch you one of my clean pocket-handkerchiefs, and put by that nice shawl."

"I can't tell you what happened, *madam*, to my master in the dungeon where he lay so long; you will hear it all from that sweet young Lord Mr. Horace Littleton; he knows how to tell it better than me. Oh Miss Rosy, *madam*, that's a man, indeed;

"——— When he speaks,

"The air, a chartered libertine, is still;

"And the mute wonder lurketh in men's ears,

"To steal his sweet and honey'd sentences."

Rosa could ask no more questions; her cheeks glowed, and her eyes filled.

John's modesty asked if she had any orders; and as soon as a gentle "No, John," issued from her lips, he left the boudoir without a look at Betty.

"Lord! Lord!" cried she, "when will my sufferens end!"

Rosa, thinking neither of her nor her sufferens, took a ramble by moonlight.

CHAP. IX.

"Self-interest, it is agreed, is the prime mover of human
"actions. Perhaps that cannot be denied; but a con-
"tempt of *law, mercenary, self-interest*, is the sure
"consequence of the ambition which self-interest of an
"higher order always inspires."

HOWEVER indefinable the feelings of Lady Denningcourt when she was convinced Wallace Buhannun yet lived, there was one point, on which no argument could be admitted either in her opinion or that of Lady Gauntlet, which was, the indispensable propriety of informing him of the existence of his child previous to the proposed arrangements for Rosa's marriage; and this was a

matter of such delicacy and importance, that the means of doing it, without the least shock to Rosa's delicacy, seemed to be the only thing to be considered.

So well, the Countess declared, she knew the soul of Wallace Buhannun, that he would never be prevailed on to enter a house in which she resided as the widow of Lord Denningcourt, whether he did or did not know at this time her name and rank. The latter indeed, Lady Gauntlet thought most probable, from the manner in which he had heard the present situation of Rosa mentioned.

So entirely satisfied was she also that her first attachment would have been sanctioned by the laws of her country, had she not innocently consented to marry Lord Denningcourt; and so solemn did she still consider her first engagement, that her heart, which incessantly reproached her for the last, shrunk from the idea of meeting a man so fatal to her race, and so injured by herself; and were it not that justice and honour not to mention maternal affection, enforced the obligation of
maternal

maternal duty, she would have gone to Athelane, and stopped there as long as the General remained at Delworth. "But this child!" she cried, weeping—"this daughter! for whom I am to demand the suffrages of a parent—ah! in what a state will he find her! naturalized with inferior people—her lot cast among those with whom neither of her parents can associate, and repugnant to the habits, connection, and manners suitable to her birth and their rank. Oh, Lady Gauntlet!" she added, passionately wringing her hands, "could you have believed my father, him who so cordially sympathised in your misfortunes, could have dealt so hard by me and my child?"

Lady Gauntlet, who was charmed with the mild graces and interesting manner of the amiable Countess, endeavoured to sooth the inquietude of her mind, by adducing the tender propriety of her own conduct throughout the whole of this affecting transaction. "There really was," she said, "no accounting for the turn some minds took: it had been observed of high descent, that it was

never disregarded but by those who were conscious of not possessing it. "We," she continued, "my dear Countess, have no such consciousness about us, yet I am not one of its bigots—your daughter is by no means an unique in the art of sinking,—if, indeed, a young person, whose mind is not contaminated, may be justly said to sink. 'Tis a mortifying truth, that people of rank complain of the increasing insubordination they themselves provoke: What, for instance, can be more absurd than for such women as Lady Gauntlet to demand respect, or such men as her husband and the Earl his late brother, to value themselves on their noble descent? High rank, adorned with congenial virtues, will enforce regard; the lower order naturally love the virtues by which they are benefitted, and respect the example, which it is both their interest and duty to follow; but, on the contrary, when they hear of the enormities committed by some titled unblushing woman of quality, or some lawless high-blooded libertine, what can be more ridiculous than to expect the hatred and contempt

contempt they excite, should be qualified, by a remembrance of whose daughter or whose son they are. It is not, indeed, to their advantage it should be so, since, if there be any thing *worth* remembering in their families, the contrast between past and present must become more striking;—and as people of high rank can only be self-debased, so commoners, who are self-ennobled by their integrity, rise, as they sink in the estimation of both God and man. One cannot, indeed, but wish your daughter had been more sensible of her own value; but she must make a family,—the name of Croak, with your countenance, and that of her father may become respectable, and, comparatively, you may call yourself a happy mother. Think of poor Kattie Buhanun! she could never forget her beauty and family; her poor mother talked of nothing else.”

Lady Denningcourt felt the justice as well as kindness of Lady Gauntlet's remarks;—“perhaps,” said she, “had I never seen Rosa, I might not have felt so heavily my daughter's deficiencies.”

“ Oh my friend, but Rosa *is* an unique ; your daughter is *not*, that is all.”

“ But had I such a child to bear the olive branch to her father ;—to mediate between his indignant anger and her mother’s unintended crime ;—to inspire him with paternal tenderness, and to give me peace ; oh ! Lady Gauntlet, I never look at her face, never hear her speak or admire the graceful motion of her lovely form, but my heart sinks into despondence, and I am ready to sin against her Maker and mine ;—and then her resemblance to her patron,—does it not seem a mockery of fate to fill me with impossible wishes and vain regrets.”

“ It was,” Lady Gauntlet replied, “ a concatenation of uncommon circumstances, like that which after so long period had restored the General almost from the grave ;—but by no means either in the one case or the other of that great import, as to make or mar the happiness of any party concerned, after the certainty that, however faulty, Elinor was really her daughter, and that the General, her

her father still lived ; every other consideration were subordinate and transient,

“ Like bubbles in the sea of matter borne,

“ They rise, they break, and to that sea return.”

“ But how shall I wean my heart from its fond attachment to this lovely girl ! I have indulged it till it is become a part of myself ; what a desert will this house appear when her soft voice and light tread are no longer heard.”

“ We must think of that,” said Lady Gauntlet, “ when we have resolved how to get over the first embarrassment ; the General will be here to-morrow.”

“ Not *here* ! Lady Gauntlet, not *here* !— I should expire with shame to see him ; I cannot see him indeed, any where ;—I think I can never see him ; to know that he lives, that he is happy—”

“ And well married !”

“ Lady Gauntlet !”

“ Nay, my dear Countess, I was only willing to try how far female heroism could go ; but if you please we will take pillow counsel before we make our final determination.—

tion.—There is our girl—what a picture! gliding under the lunar ray, her light drapery gently agitated by the calm breeze; oh how often have I contemplated her charming figure with pleasure, while the impression of her sweet conciliating manners have been warm on my mind.”

Rosa was passing the window; she obeyed the first summons, and had the felicity to perceive Lady Denningcourt composed and quite recovered. They retired after a slight repast, and the Countess agreeing to banish Rosa from their breakfast table, Lady Gauntlet whispered her to prepare for a visit to Delworth.

“Geminigig!” cried Betty, when she attended in the chamber, “why Lord! Miss Rosa, what a rigmirol story this here is about my master; and I assure you, John Brown keeps on his high ropes; but what do you think our ouse-keeper ses?—she ses as she thinks we shall have a double wedden; the more the merrier say I,—but who’d a thoft that pale faced Mr. Littleton, as used to write for Sir Solomon Muthroom, would turn out

to be a Lord; they may well say nobody knows their own luck;—I am sure my sufferens have lasted long enough, and as to John Brown's keepen in the fulks,—but pray Miss, is it true as you are agwain to have a great fortin, and be Lady Gauntlet directly."

"Neither one nor the other, Betty."

"Oh geminigig, as our—"

"I think, Betty, you had better leave off that exclamation, if you wish to get your husband out of his fulks."

"Why Miss, so I have left it off before him; and as to our Stuart, why you know Miss he is gone to London, or some where near abouts, with Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, poor old soul, I should not wonder if she had a colt's tooth, and made up a match with our Stuart,—to be sure he is a portly man, and wuth a power of money."

Rosa, who in general suffered Mrs. Brown to run on her own way, was now as much displeased to hear of the portly Stuart and his power of money, as John Brown himself could

could be, angrily bid Betty get ready to attend her to Delworth in the morning.

“There now !” cried Betty, “now you are angry too, Miss Rosy, and I am sure that’s more nor what I never inspected from you, because I was always good to you, even when you was a sarvant, and what’s more, a beggar, and that I shall alway say,—but there is no ind to my misfortune.”

The chamber consultation of the two Countesses did not break up till near noon, when the carriage being ready, Rosa was admitted.

“You are leaving me, my Rosa,” said Lady Denningcourt, weeping; “I have no hope the sad evening of my days can be cheered by your sweet society; ’tis a deprivation most greivous to my heart, but the hard lesson of my life has been to study resignation. You go from Denningcourt, where that negative happiness which attends on quietude, on a kind of rest of nature, could only be hoped; to Delworth, where the animated sensibility of your fine mind will be called into active enjoyment; where

a maternal friend, a generous patron, and tender lover, will rejoice in your society, for the same reason that I regret it,—their own felicity is dependant on yours. The exchange, my amiable girl, is to your advantage; else the conflict I feel in parting with you would be insupportable;—you will sometimes steal to me; I cannot doubt but I shall be in your thoughts.”

Rosa threw herself at the feet of the amiable Countess, whose arms encircled her; their tears were blended.

Lady Gauntlet, though affected herself, endeavoured to carry the then hope of the parting friends to future happy meetings;—“at least,” said she, “if you lose the daughter, you will have the mother; I will certainly take Rosa’s place at whatever house Lady Denningcourt shall please to occupy.”

“Oh! cried Rosa, throwing her arms around Lady Denningcourt’s neck, “why must we go without you? and why, in the moment that my heart is filled with thankful joy for the blessing I am going to meet, does it feel a pang so bitter, so repugnant at leaving
ing

ing you ? but I *will* steal to you, yes, before I take pleasure to my heart, you shall share it ; I will inform you of every thing while this frightful chasm must last,—surely that will not, cannot be long.”

Lady Gauntlet hinting that as the General and her son must now be within a few miles, there was no answering for the speed of impatience, and therefore not finding her at Delworth—

“ Not *here* ! they must not come *here*,” cried Lady Denningcourt, gasping for breath. “ I commit myself and my child to you Lady Gauntlet ; amply as it is in my power, and my heart to provide for her, I would not, oh it would kill me, to know Wallace Buchanan was indifferent to *his* child, the child of Elinor Athelane.”

“ We have settled all this, I believe Countess,” replied Lady Gauntlet gravely, hurt for Rosa, whose interest this warm solicitude without every explanation, might be supposed to affect.

It was not that the attachment of Lady Denningcourt was less sincere, or her intention

tion towards Rosa less generous than that of Magdalena; but the mind of the former, though inured to mild and patient endurance, was at this period enervated by the delicate embarrassments of her situation; it was the *pride*, not the interest of maternal feelings, that rendered her so anxious the father should acknowledge the child, and she had already resolved on presenting Rosa with an equivalent for any loss of fortune from the General she might sustain by any such acknowledgment;—while the latter, wise, noble, and consistent, resolved to reject all advantages—it was *Rosa*, not the General's fortune, she wished her son to possess, and it was *herself*, not any local advantage, that must make him happy.

After repeated embraces, after floods of tears, and sighing reluctance on both sides, Rosa followed Lady Gauntlet into her carriage.

Rosa was always above the mere punctilios of ceremony; the warm embrace of Magdalena, an embrace that seemed to greet the bride of her son, gave an emotion to her heart

heart that sent the pure blood into her cheeks; she was indeed going to the house of her lover, and though under protection of one of the best of women, there was something unpleasant in that; but the impossibility of receiving her benefactor at the jointure house, and the eager desire she felt to fly to his feet, conquered all false modesty in respect to the first interview with Horace.

They passed through a private gate, to avoid the crowd of tenants and country people, who were, they heard, assembled near the lodge on the common, to welcome their rightful Lord, by a delightful and romantic, though almost imperceptible ascent to the beautiful flat on which the fine gothic building stood;—on the clear basin in front, the little vessel was all ready, decked with garlands of flowers, musical instruments, and new silk colours, to receive the Earl.

The profusion of fine summer flowers which impregnated the air with sweets when Rosa first saw this charming place, were now succeeded by autumnal plants and exotics, not less beautiful though less highly
scented

scented with natural perfumes ; but the prospect round was improved by the variegated fields, which having now yielded their abundance, were covered with cattle ; and the still content which reign over the face of husbandry, when their harvest is got in, seemed spread over the many miles the eye took in from Delworth house.

“ This is really enchanting, Rosa,” said Lady Gauntlet, with perhaps a sentiment of indignant regret, at her son’s having so long been deprived of the possession of his right.

Rosa was recurring to her first sight of the *heaven* which Mrs. Woudbe had already thought her own ; and as her eye wandered from the castle to the Jointure-house, wonder, joy, thankful gratitude, and confidence in coming happiness, brought the flush of sensibility to her cheeks, and the tear of pleasure into her eyes.

Lord Gauntlet had, with a presage of delight glowing in his bosom, sent a confidential servant express to Delworth, the instant he had obtained the General’s promise to go there. The standing furniture were all as

Rosa

Rosa had left it, some additional ornaments, and a rich service of plate excepted; but in general she might have fancied, from the appearance of all around her, it was impossible such extraordinary changes as had taken place since she left it, could be real.

Christiana, the now settled house-keeper, welcomed her lady with tears of joy, and after gazing at Rosa with evident approbation, retired.

“ I hope this forin ousekeeper understands Englis,” said Betty to Mrs. Ferguson, as Peggy was now called, “ else I am sure we ladies maids must have a room to ourselves.— But pray Miss Rosy,” stepping after Rosa, and whispering, “ can you think where John Brown is ?”

“ Gone to meet his master, perhaps, Betty.”

“ Well, Miss, I don’t say nothen against that; but I think as he mought have paid his wife some perspection before strangers, and a forin ousekeeper; but my sufferens—”

“ Are very great to be sure, but I can’t stop to hear them.—”

“ Gracious

“ Gracious goodness! Miss Rosy, why you are as light as a feather; well, faint heart never won fair lady, so I may as well be light too, for all I see no ind to my sufferens.”

Rosa, who was familiar enough with the apartments of Delworth-house to do the honours of it to Lady Gauntlet, pointed to her notice the several little incidents in which she had been interested; particularly Lady Gauntlet’s dressing-room, that where she had been so painfully surpris’d by the letter signed “ H. Montreville,”—and that elegant drawing-room, where she had taken what she called her trial. The apartment of the young ladies, where the books, music, works, and drawing remained, with the needles, pencils, crayons and open lessons, just as they had left them, gave both ladies a pang. They were turning hastily into the picture-gallery, when John Brown, who had already discarded his cork-leg, as being more trouble than the wooden one, stumped up to inform them his master and the young Lord were approaching, that the country people at the last town had taken the horses from the chaise,

chaise, and though it was warm work, relieved each other, till the tenants, who met them a mile off, insisted on their right;—the townsmen had heard reason, and—hark! here they are.”

They listened; the musicians who were now afloat in the vessel, struck up, “See the conquering hero comes.” At the first huzza, John’s three cocked military hat was thrown up, and his loud repeated cheers drove the ladies as far from him as the gallery would admit.

“Huzza! huzza!” cried the crowds, that with the most respectful care of the fine walks, drew and followed the carriage, over which, and the horses, were thrown garland’s of laurel tied with bunches of blue and red ribbands; “Huzza, huzza,” echoed John, stumping up to the window, instead of going to the door to receive his master as he alighted; “Huzza.”

“’Tis he, I ken the manners of his gait,

“He rises on his toe; that spirit of his

“In aspiration lifts him from the earth.”

“Oh

“Oh my dear master—,” and Betty’s nice shawl was lifted to his eyes.

Lord Gauntlet’s eyes eagerly explored every window, till he met his soul’s desire in a reciprocal glance from Rosa; he saw her, and saw nothing else; and, for the author of this long history piques herself on the truth, although Rosa’s first benefactor, her friend, her more than father’s eyes were also fixed on her, she forgot in that moment that there were more than two people in this wide habitable world; and no young lady, who after parting with the first object of their choice, when fate and fortune were equally adverse to the hope of ever meeting again, need be told, those two, were her lover and herself. From this blissful reverie she was however roused, by fresh shouts from the multitude, seconded by John Brown; and before she recovered from her confusion, felt herself pressed to the bosom of General Buhanun, and saw the elegant graceful and accomplished Horace, kneeling at her feet.

To those aforesaid young ladies who have been in similar, though not exactly the same

circumstances, we leave the definition of Rosa's feelings towards her lover; but who *can* define the enthusiastic gratitude which gushed in torrents from her eyes, when, though she had no remembrance of the person or manners of her benefactor till she saw him, her recollection became every moment more acute; past scenes returned; she was taken from the well-remembered white steps of Mrs. Feversham's house; cleaned from the filth of beggary; reserved from the danger of perishing for want, and received into the warm heart of him, through whose arms she slipped at this moment, to embrace his feet and wash them with her tears.

Horace ventured to seize her white hand and press it to his lips, as her patron raised her again to his bosom.

"She is indeed," said he, viewing her with attention, and apparent delight, "beauty itself;—I never saw a woman altogether so perfect; what eyes, what complexion and what a form.—You must forgive me Rosa, I am your father and may be allowed to find out beauties in my own, to which common
eyes

eyes are blind—yes, the dimpled fascination round that lovely mouth is the same; oh, how irresistible did I find it, when scarce another feature was perceptible,—and that voice, my soul was enchanted by it.”

Rosa glanced a tearful remembrance of Lady Denningcourt at Lady Gauntlet.

The General considered it as a tacit reproach; he apologized to the Dowager, while Horace murmured a few rapturous expressions in Rosa's ear.—They became more composed, as the certainty of present happiness and hope of future, were confirmed.—They walked to the front of the house; the music was still playing on the water; the crowd, for whose entertainment an ox was roasting whole on the common in front of the great gates, where also the prudent steward had conveyed several hogsheads of ale and other liquors waited, to give the new Earl and his friends a parting cheer, and then departed, highly gratified with his condescension and munificence; and need it be said the dinner quartette at home was a happy

one—or that the succeeding evening could be less than delightful.

“ Oh my dearest benefactor,” cried Rosa, kissing the General’s hand, “ by what miracle are you restored to us ?”

“ By no miracle, nor even, in the service in which I was engaged, by uncommon means. I parted with Horace, as he will tell you, on the eve of a projected sortie, which indeed, was a forlorn hope, after I had given him, as far as depended on me, the most valuable jewel I possessed; *he will also tell you about that too.*”

“ I was wounded in the early part of the engagement, but it was a considerable time before I fainted from loss of blood; two of the enemies subalterns had marked my fall and thought me a prize worth carrying to their commander; he ordered me to be conveyed from the field of battle with their own wounded officers; and it was this circumstance that prevented my being sent to Serinapatam, where General Matthews and many brave men were murdered in cold blood, and where I should probably have shared the same
fate,

fate, had I been with them ; we, on the contrary, were sent to a fort in the interior of the kingdom, where, as the keeper had *some* humanity, I might have lingered many years, had not a report reached Lord C——, that many Europeans were kept back, in different parts of Tippoo's dominions, after he had pretended to have delivered them all up.

“ The tyrant was by this time humbly suing for peace, but the British General refused to listen to any terms till, as a preliminary step, every European prisoner was liberated ; Tippoo was neither in a situation to refuse, nor to brave the resentment of so humane a commander if he had been detected in deceiving him ; among the objects ejected from the miserable dungeons I was one, so much in dishabille that my own corps did not know me ; I had not made my toilet, my pretty Rosa, above five years,—my beard and nails must therefore have been very formidable ; I was however soon recognised, and such was the indignation of our soldiers at my long confinement, it was perhaps well for Tippoo that peace was signed. Well, my

charming Rosa, there was no miracle in all this: The only very strange circumstance attending it is, that while chained to the floor of a dungeon I obtained a compleat conquest over myself. ‘The kingdom of every wise man is in his own breast,’—so said a Scotch philosopher; and perhaps it is the kingdom most arduous to govern properly; mine at least, was in a state of actual rebellion against my peace many years, *too many*, preceding my confinement; but if five years lying in a dungeon, without the light of heaven, or any other light thrown on the subject, will not enable a man to conquer his passions, there is no rashness in the conclusion that nothing will.

“ I loved a beautiful woman once, to such desperation, that having armed my fatal hand against her brother, my friend’s life, I thought the next best thing, was to arm it against my own; I was not quite so successful in the last attempt as the first, because I was destined to hear that my wife was the wife of another, and to lie five years in a dungeon; as the first did not destroy me, though I could only hear the fact with-

without the particulars, I thought myself invulnerable; and having nothing more amusing to do, used to ponder whole days, weeks and months on causes and effects; the result was, that I acquitted myself, and what was more hard, I acquitted my angel wife; my crime was involuntary, and so, after a fair trial, which, chained myself to the ground, I could not help allowing her, and admitting all her goodness and virtue to plead in her favour, I believed hers to be: From this moment I found I could suffer with a vast deal more ease to myself; my temper, which had long been in a shocking state of irritation, resumed its first placid cast; and though I warn every body to be very much afraid of me, I came to Europe in such good humour, that even the honours and reward heaped on me at my return has not yet spoiled my temper; the king has thought proper to put me upon the staff, and the company have made me a richer man than I desired or deserve, and yet I feel no alteration in myself, and this is really a miracle. My poor honest fellow, John

R 4

Brown,

Brown, has been more unfortunate without a similar effect."

"Poor John," joined Rosa, "his wife."

"Ah Rosa! his wife indeed is a trial more severe, I am afraid, than my dungeon; I think he seems wife sick,—but she is with you?"

"For this history of your suffering and conquest, General, I promise," said Lady Gaunlet, "to reward you, if you will take your coffee in my dressing-room to-morrow morning *tête-à-tête*."

"Take care, madam," replied the General, "what you do; I have not been a month on the staff; I shall be expected to distinguish myself; you are not indeed a married woman, and therefore, if your character should suffer, the notoriety would not be sufficient to give me any sort of eclat;—that, I warn you, is your only safeguard against the attack of my crutch stick."

It was now only that Rosa observed he walked with one.

"It

“ It was my hard bed in the dungeon, my dear,” said he, observing concern in Rosa’s looks.

“ I am desperate,” rejoined Lady Gauntlet, “ and to prove it will not trouble you to come to me ; your reward you shall have, and I will bring it to you in your dressing-room.”

“ I hope,” replied the General, “ you have well considered this matter ; since you know how impossible it will be for this poor boy and girl to amuse themselves while I am tacked up with your ladyship?”

“ They will do as well as they can ;—and Rosa must shew Horace her trial room ;—and my dear, suppose you give him the history of the *naughty letter*.”

Rosa blushed, but did not refuse Lord Gauntlet’s earnest request for the same favour from her, his mother offered the General ;—Lord and Lady Gauntlet’s history and misfortunes furnished the next topic of conversation till supper.

With what proud delight did John place himself perpendicularly behind his master’s

chair; in how kind an accent were the orders given him; and how adroitly did he manage his wooden leg in flying to execute them.

How enraptured did Horace gaze on his charming Rosa; how often did he bless the enthusiasm of the best of mothers, which carried her to Scotland; and how sincerely did he rejoice in the event, that proved his adored Walsingham to be her loved Rosa, and the protégée of his patron; and with what soft reproach did he advert to the impression she had suffered to take place in her mind, to his prejudice; with what sweet confusion did she now wonder how she could, for one moment, believe him to be the minion of the contemptible Mrs. Woudbe; and oh! with what more than rapture did the fond mother contemplate the two beings most dear to her on earth; and while her heart over-flowed with tender recollections, she sighed, we only want my father now.

“ Ah! madam, *only*,” repeated Rosa.

“ Why, whom else do we want?” asked the general; your patroness, Lady Denningcourt?

you

you see how it is, Rosa; I advise you to take care of Horace, for even a battered old beau is caught up before one can look round. I had half a mind to fall in love with this Lady Denningcourt, if Lady Gauntlet had not quite pressed me into her service."

Rosa burst into tears; the General, not conscious how much he spoke to her feelings, was alarmed, and Horace half distracted.

Rosa's heart was on her lips; she forgot the caution given her by the two ladies—her fine features were full of meaning.

The general doubted whether her emotion did not proceed from a fear, that she might have a rival in his affections and fortune;—the dear girl, he thought, could have no conception to what excess she was beloved, and it was natural for her to be tenacious in every thing relative to her reception into so honourable and opulent a family. "I talk of falling in love," said he, "but nobody will return the passion of an old soldier who is poor; my fortune is all yours, irrevocably yours."

“ *All*, my dear father ;—you have bid me call you so—not all, God forbid—you have one other claimant.”

“ The Major’s children,—I shall certainly consider them, if it were only for their father’s kindness to you.”

“ But, sir, is there no other ?”

“ None that I admit.”

“ Ah my father !”

Lady Gauntlet looked surprised ; she neither understood how far Rosa meant to go, nor what were her motives ; she even began to doubt whether Lady Denningcourt might not have sent her some instructions since their parting.

“ I can’t comprehend you,” said the General ; “ but I swear by the great God you are my—”

Rosa put her hand to his mouth. “ Yes,” he continued, with vehemence, “ yes, I swear by the great God, you are my sole heiress.”

Rosa, who was herself too partial to Elinor to doubt she would be beloved when known,
begged

begged him not to swear *any* thing till he had heard *every* thing.

"What is there to hear? this is trifling," and the General looked grave.

"You will breakfast with Lady Gauntlet to-morrow, my dear father."

"And you, my dear angel," joined Montreville, will breakfast—"

"With you."

The General then rung for his servant; his lameness was very slight after a little exercise; but in the moment of beginning to move, he could not walk without support; Horace offered his arm, and John stumped on before with lights.

Betty officiously appeared at the chamber door, and in spite of John's forbidding looks, was all smiles and courtesies; in the midst of which she made a discovery of great importance, which was, that though her husband still kept on his high ropes himself, he had not been complaining to his master.

"I am glad to see you, Mrs. Brown," said the General, stopping as he passed her; "I hope you have been as good a wife to
my

my honest fellow as the world would let you."

As Betty had a consciousness about her which prevented her answer, she could only cry and courtesy to the ground.

"Well, my good girl," continued the General, "you must take care of him now; you see what his love for his master has made him suffer."

"Suffer, your honour," fobbed Betty, "I am sure my sufferens would milt the very flinted stones."

"Poor girl! good night," and the General put a heavy purse into her hand.

Betty continued courtesying with a handkerchief at her eyes till John flung the door to with violence.

"That's manners now," said Betty; "howsever as I always told John, fat sorrow is better nor lean sorrow at any time; and so I shall first go and see what I have got in the purse, and then tend Miss Rosy—Lord only to think of her being a lady after all!"

The

The next morning Rosa passed more time at her toilet, and yet left it less satisfied than usual; her legs trembled, and her heart beat as she tottered down stairs; and when led by her handsome lord to the bow window in the little drawing room, her heart beat with such unremitting violence, speech was denied her; but sweet as are even the pains of a first passion when its basis is honour, and its support virtue, how soon how very soon does mutual confidence banish all restraint.

Lord Gauntlet was the very same Horace Montreville whose passion for her, when she was a suspicious character, was blended with respect; and Rosa was the same frank ingenuous creature, who only feared to lose his esteem by that confession which was ever ready to burst from her lips.

Their hearts were united, their language was that of truth, and every expression of tenderness chastened by sentiment and delicacy.

“Horace,” cried Rosa, “I have two mothers; yours is one, and you know how dear she has ever been to me; Lady Denningcourt

ningcourt, I can never tell you what she is,—shall I introduce you to my other mother?”

Horace reached her parasol; she put her willing arm under his, and they rambled to the jointure-house; there, like the genius of contemplation, sat the lovely Lady Denningcourt in her boudoir; the moment she beheld Rosa they were locked in each others arms.

The “how do you?” and “what do you?” which furnish grand subjects for the letters and conversations of modern friends, were here discarded,—it was sincere and animated affection which warmed the hearts and taught the sublime phrases of true esteem to the trio now present, and marked every passing moment with interest.

Lady Denningcourt, conscious of the subject of that *tête-à-tête* Horace laughingly adverted to, dared not press their stay, though she feared to see them go; but Rosa having engaged to steal away as often as possible, and Horace having promised secrecy, they returned to Delworth.

The

The conference had ended, but not with all the consequences Lady Gauntlet wished and expected.

The General, notwithstanding the boasted placid cast of his temper, was exceedingly affected; he recollected to have seen Elinor when a fine child, with Doctor Croak; he considered her marriage as the consequence of her attachment to the family with whom she had been brought up, and rather applauded than condemned it; he heard with profound attention the proofs of her birth, as given by Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, whom he knew and esteemed, and from Doctor Croak, whom he also knew but did *not* esteem; and he was told of the kindness of the Duke of Athelane to his daughter, and the great views she had disappointed, without asking a single question about her mother.

Lady Gauntlet, who had been solemnly enjoined by Lady Denningcourt, not to mention her, except led to do so by circumstances, did not feel herself at liberty to enter further than he himself chose to advert to in his story, said nothing more about his daughter, than answering his interrogatories.

“ I thought,”

“ I thought,” said the General, “ I had conquered my rebellious passions, and established peace in the little kingdom of my own bosom; but the evil, I fear, has not been radically cured; I must certainly see this poor child; and as certainly my little protégée’s interest will suffer: you need not speak Lady Gauntlet, your heart is that sort of one, with which mine holds intellectual converse; I am almost grieved to say, that I fear I never can love my daughter as well as I do our dear Rosa; but I dare not define my own feelings in regard to her; she is the child of love, of my Elinor, my dear lost wife—my child;—forgive me, madam—I am indisposed—one of my old head aches—”

The General trembled; the old tremor on his voice, and the salt rheum in his eyes returned.

Lady Gauntlet left him with a sort of disappointed sensation at her heart, that carried her to her closet, instead of going immediately, as she had intended, to the Jointure-house; and the whole long morning was left to the happy Horace, and his lovely Rosa.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

“ Give these trifles a corner in your cabinet, where they may
“ be sheltered from those daring critics, who, without
“ producing any thing of their own, determine with
“ assurance on the works of others.”

THAT there is no such thing as perpetual happiness but at Gangaridian, where one cannot go without griffins, or at Eldarado, where one cannot go at all, was proved by our heroine and her lover, on the former hinting at the propriety of making some alteration in her dress before dinner, previous to which the latter was extremely urgent to hear the “ I love” from her lips, which he had all day read in her eyes; and he was no doubt properly miserable, when on failing to prevail, he with an arm encircling her waist,
and

and a white hand clasped in his, rather whispered than sung,

“ In all my Emma’s beauty blest,

“ Amid profusion I must pine;

“ If, when she gave me up her breast,

“ Its panting tenant were not ——”

“ mine,” he would have said, had he not been interrupted.

“ I will go in, fellow,” said a voice at the door; “ you shall not prevent me; do you know who I am?”

“ No,—nor have I the smallest curiosity about the matter;—I know my Lord is engaged, and that it is my duty to prevent impertinent people from breaking in upon him.”

“ I know your Lord very well, and he knows me; he would not call me impertinent;—Miss Walsingham is my particular friend, and——”

“ And pray who is Miss Walsingham?—she is not known here, I believe, nor any other Miss of your acquaintance.”

“ Well, don’t make yourself unhappy about that; I must and will see Lord Gauntlet;

let; he is in this room;—I know every room in this house, and will enter.”

“ I must beg leave to say you shall not enter.”

“ I will.”

“ You shall not, till I apprise my Lord.”

“ It is Lady Mushroom,” cried Rosa, and immediately, the lady proving too hard for the valet, in she bounced;—but in what a situation !

“ Ah ! my dear Miss Walsingham, how glad I am to see you :—I am in a worse pickle now than when I met you on Holborn-hill, at that vile chandler-woman’s :—Oh ! Lord Gauntlet, you must remember *me*, tho’ I am sure I should not have known you—you are so grown, so improved, so perfectly a man of fashion;—I am come to ask your protection, and as I know you won’t refuse it,—here (bursting into tears, and throwing herself into an armed chair) I shall stay; I am sure it broke my heart to leave this sweet place.”

Lady Mushroom was indeed in a pickle : her gold muslin hung in tatters, and the rich lace

lace trimmings torn to rags; her auburn wig, which she thought more becoming than her own dark locks, drawn to one corner of her head, so that it looked as if adorned with two distinct sorts of hair; one broken earring; her face and neck all over scratches, and her arms covered with bruises.

Rosa, independent of the concern she would have felt for a stranger in such a situation, had a sort of partial regard for her tattered ladyship; she rung for her servant, and requested Lady Mushroom would accept some other clothes.

"Gracious goodness!" cried Betty, "as sure as death, that cheatin old rogue Sir Solomon Mushroom, and my old mistress Madam Feversham, han't been doing nothen more nor less than fitine."

"Go, you impertinent," replied Lady Mushroom, accepting Rosa's offered arm, while the Earl viewed her with amazement—"go! Sir Solomon will never cheat again."

"Geminigig! won't he?—that's good news;—but then I am sure he is dead."

"That

“That he is indeed, Betty; and I wish he had been so before he entered these doors—I could but have lost my pitiful annuity, and that I have done after all my plague.”

“Dead! impossible!” cried Rosa.

“Dead! Sir Solomon Mushroom dead!” exclaimed Lord Gauntlet.

“Ah, poor wicked old man! he is indeed; he never held up his head after he heard that odd creature, the blackamore Colonel—”

“General Buhanun, if you please, ma’am.”

“A General, is he? Well, so much the better; if we sink, the Colonel blackamore goes of course;—but poor Sir Sol never looked up after he heard this General survived.”

Horace immediately carried this news to his friend, and the widow was conducted by Rosa to her dressing-room.

“Lord, Miss Rosy!” cried Betty, “why your clothes will no more fit Madam Feverham than they’ll fit me; why she is about as big as three of you. Supposed I go down to the forin-ousekeeper, and borrrer some things of her; if they be a little matter
too

too short, madam won't mind that; she always loved to shew her legs, 'cause they are so andsome."

This oblique compliment to her person both softened and gratified Lady Mushroom. "Ay, Betty, my good girl," she cried, "do—and get me something to take, for I have neither eat nor slept since I was at Lady Denningcourt's yesterday morning."

Rosa apologised for not offering her refreshments. "But how, my dear Lady," she added, "came you in this dreadful situation?"

"How my dear! rather wonder I am alive. Oh! you can never divine what I have endured! It was near evening before we got to our inn; and Persian, who is an exceeding good dresser of hair and layer-on of *rouge*, had no sooner made me a little decent, than in comes, rattling to the paltry inn, (a poor place for people of our rank) a post-chaise and four: they called for horses on to Delworth; and I, unfortunately hearing them, went to the window, merely out of curiosity, and, to my astonishment, saw that
vulgar,

vulgar fresh-coloured healthy-looking creature nurse Dorothy—you remember her? she used always to be haunting the dear disagreeable Mushroom, and with her the quondam Lady Lowder, as haggared and pale as—no matter what;—well, my dear, they saw me too, so I kept nodding—Betty knows my way;—up they came, and fell upon me like two furies;—that shocking Dorothy called me—yes, Miss, she called me a double-u! Oh, to think I should live to be called a double-u!—’tis very hard.”

“When one don’t not deserve it especially,” joined Betty.

“But had you nobody to protect you?” asked Rosa, “for I am sure, against Lady Lowder, and such a companion, you had need of protection.”

“Oh no my dear, it was the highest amusement in the world to the people of the house; the nurse, who avowed herself to be the mother of the two dear disagreeable Mushrooms, said I had got her husband—the daughter said I had got her clothes and property; both of them fixed their talons in my

face and neck, and you see how they have mauled me. I ran shrieking into poor wicked Sir Sol's room—they followed: Mr. Turgid was sitting close by his bed-side, with pen, ink, and paper. Before I could speak, Lady Lowder snatched the paper out of Turgid's hand; and finding he was making a will to give all poor Sir Sol's money to charitable uses, she fell into sham fits; her mother raved at poor wicked Sir Sol, and asked him if he was not ashamed, with one foot in the grave, to have double-u's with him. Sir Sol said (and God forgive him! he looked too spiteful for a dying man) he knew too well he had one foot in the grave, and was sensible that double-u's were not fit company for dying men, and therefore desired she and her daughter would instantly leave the room; as to that lady, (meaning me) I have married her; she may be as bad as you for ought I know—and I hope she is, that you may be mutual plagues to each other. Mr. Turgid, I wish to sign my will.—There was no will to be signed—the dear disagreeable Mushroom had torn it to atoms;—so old

Turgid went out to write another, and then both the furies fell on me again; and I do think that they would have killed me, had not Dorothy happened to find out poor Sir Sol was in a fit; then she began crying and making a horrid noise about him;—for my part, I was ready to die with fear of them all. He recovered a little, and insisted on their leaving him; they would not stir without me. Some doctors, as they were called, came in, and talked a vast deal of nonsense, as doctors always do, you know;—however, they agreed in one thing, which was to clear the room; the woman of the house was a conjurer—she was sure, by Dorothy's looks, she was a wife, and by mine that I was a mistress;—so, as she loved nothing in the world better than an honest woman, except it was an honest man, she was very civil to her, and very rude to me. They took possession of my apartments, and all my things, while I crept to Persian's room, and hid myself, till we were all alarmed by the sound of a pistol, which, as I never thought poor Sir Sol had the courage to hurt himself, I little expected

came from his apartment. His valet, in a short time, came to the door of Persian's chamber—I thought it was the frightful Dorothy—and begged she would not speak; he rapped again—at last Persian answered. I am come to tell my lady, said he, as I know she *is* my lady, and Doll Tear-sheet is *not*, that my master has cured himself—he has taken a pill. Ah, heaven! I cried, I care nothing about him nor Doll; all I want is to get out of their way.—My master has shot himself, said he, and I am come to your ladyship, by Mr. Turgid's desire, for orders. My dear Miss Walsingham, I was as much shocked at the man's callous indifference to his master's fate, as at the suicide, which was very silly in poor Sir Sol, for I really don't think he could have lived many days. However, the man still teased me for orders, and I heard Dorothy's and Lady Lowder's voices quite ring the house; so, I said, I should give no orders, but to get a chaise to carry me to Lord Gauntlet's;—so here I am, my dear; and I am sure, if you don't give me something to bathe my bruises and let me go

go to bed, I shall certainly follow poor Sir Sol, without a pistol."

"Gracious goodness!" cried Betty, "see what a misfortunate thing it is for men to keep on the high ropes; I am sure I shall go and tell John Brown of this, as soon as ever I have tucked Madam Feversham up, and washed her scratches with aquabufade."

Rosa, pale and really shocked at the dreadful end of the bad man, left Lady Mushroom on bed, and joined Lady Gauntlet and her son. The General was indisposed, and declined dining; and Rosa, as soon as she heard it, went to his dressing-room to pay her duty; he had returned to his old habit of walking about the room, notwithstanding his lameness;—the salt rheum filled his eyes, and the tremor on his voice was strong, when he answered her affectionate inquiries.

"You know, my sweet girl," said he, "I have a daughter, and you a sister—."

"Yes, my dearest father, she has long been the sister of my heart."

"Is *she* like *her* sister, my Rosa? does she smile, and speak, and look like *you*?"

“ She does all this very pretty ;—I am no judge of likenesses ;—but must we dine without you, my father ? ”

“ I have an inveterate head-ach.— ”

“ This is the consequence of shutting yourself up ; if you would walk out ;—ah ! you cannot conceive what a delightful ramble Horace and I have had this morning, to dear Lady Denningcourt’s.”

“ If I were Lady Gauntlet, I should be jealous of this Lady Denningcourt.”

“ Oh no ! you would love her ;—oh my dear father, you would love Lady Denningcourt better — ”

“ Than I love you ? ”

“ Infinitely ;—she is such an angel ;—come to the window, and let me shew you some of her charms.—You see that little village.”

“ I see a village, not a very little one.”

“ That is Denningcourt—those buildings — ”

The dinner bell rung.

“ Go, my Rosa, you shall tell me more after you have dined—I will take coffee with you ;

you; I have letters to write, and arrangements to make, when my head permits; (and he led her reluctant to the door) I must take my rice alone."

Rosa kissed his hand, and was received by Horace at the entrance of the eating room.

Lady Gauntlet had, in the meantime, paid a visit to the widow, who, comfortably tucked up and entertained by her former servant Betty, was very well disposed to forget all her troubles, had she not been reminded of them by the Countess.

The shocking end of the wretch Sir Solomon, afforded no triumph to such hearts as those he had so cruelly injured. Lady Gauntlet begged it might not be mentioned, and the happy mother sat down between her two darlings, to talk on a more interesting subject; she related what had passed between her and the General whom she believed, intended to have an early interview with his daughter.

Rosa also gave the little history of her ramble, and Horace was eloquent in his praise of Lady Denningcourt.

The General, as he promised, joined them at coffee, and hinted a design of following a letter he had been writing, to London.

Lady Gauntlet remonstrated; Mrs. Croak was certainly more able to travel to him, under her husband's protection, than he to go to her; she begged he would permit her to invite them down to Delworth; you will, she added, only embarrass them at their farm.

"I do not mean to embarrass them, but I shall certainly remove them from their farm; but who are these? do you expect visitors?"

Lady Gauntlet just glanced the hind wheels of two carriages, which drove round to the back part of the house; but Rosa, who had seen the livery, coloured, and overpowered by a pre-sentiment of something extraordinary, which she could not understand, retired trembling and disconcerted, behind Lady Gauntlet, whispering, "it is Lady Denningcourt's chariot and family coach."

"Lady Denningcourt's!" exclaimed Lady Gauntlet.

"What!

“What! already does she return your visit?” said the General; “I wonder you are not a spoiled girl, Rosa,—but you will make my apology,—I am not fit for ladies’ company.”

“Where, where is she!” from the hall electrified the General:—“Where, where is she?” thrilled on his ear. He arose—he felt no lameness—he darted towards the door;—it was thrown open—a lady entered, followed by a group of people:—his arms expand involuntarily—they receive the fainting form of her he had ever, and only loved;—her, on whom in exile, in sickness, in prison, memory hung in ecstasy; and from whom, tho’ he knew she had given herself to another, his heart, his honour, nor his love had ever strayed. He trembled with agony, with joy, with grief;—he was not able to bear the precious burthen to a chair—he wanted support himself.

“It is my dear Lady Denningcourt!” cried Rosa, flying to her, while Lady Gauntlet, assisted by the people who followed, carried her near the air.

“ Oh Elinor ! dear Elinor ! ” said the General in a trembling voice, the salt rheum flowing down his cheeks,—“ It is she !—it is herself ;—her voice, like the last awful summons, would raise my soul from the dust. —Oh ever lovely and beloved, sweet partner of my fond heart ! what fate, what incident has once more blest my sight with her angelic form !—revive, my Elinor, revive !—She hears me not !—my soul melts in tenderness at sight of her—it annihilates time and space—it is no longer the battered, sickly, way-worn soldier ; no longer the wretched, banished exile,—but the happy Wallace Buhanun adoring his own Elinor in the wood of Athelane ! —But she, Oh God ! she remembers me as the murderer of her brother !—as a wretch, who revives from death to interrupt her felicity !—to dishonour her with prior claims !—Oh my Elinor ! fear it not—I can easier die to seal thy peace, than live to blast it.”

“ Ye sal nae du ain nor tither, an ye wull herken tull your eild frind Moggy M'Laurin,” cried the old dame, walking forward in a
stately

stately pace, with Mrs. J. Croak on one hand, and Mrs. Garnet on the other.

“She recovers! she breathes! amiable, dear Lady Denningcourt!—See Sir!—”

In raising her eyes for the first moment from Lady Denningcourt, Rosa beheld Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin and her two supporters.—

“Oh!” she shrieked, flying with an involuntary motion towards her, “Elinor!” but she instantly recoiled; her eyes met the emaciated, yet unweildy form, panting for breath, and the hollow jaundiced eye of Mrs. Garnet.

All the ignominy of her origin; the inebriety of her mother, and the vulgarity of her step-father, at once struck on her memory;—what connections, what relatives were those to introduce to the noble owners of the mansion—to acknowledge in the face of their domestics.

Lady Denningcourt had not yet recovered her senses. Lady Gauntlet, attentive only to her, did not observe, and therefore could not feel the cruel embarrassment of Rosa's mind;—Lord Gauntlet was observ-

ing what passed with eager attention,—and she even fancied a coldness in his astonished glance.

Mrs. Croak, with down-cast eyes, stood transfixed to one spot; she made no effort to speak or move.

Rosa, bewildered, humbled and discouraged, again fixed her eyes on Mrs. Garnet, who had moved round Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, near to Mrs. Croak.

“ My child ! ” she murmured, “ my dear Rosa ! ”

Rosa's face changed in a moment from pale to scarlet :—This mother then knew her; she was come to claim her maternal right ;—oh ! where should she hide the disgrace ;—yet, had she not been kind to her ! had she not offered her a home ! nay, had there not been times when that home appeared to be her only resource !—Oh why then this unnatural, this unconquerable repugnance !—Again she met the hollow glance of this mother's eye ; a tear trembled in it ; Mr. Garnet with his dark coat, red plush waistcoat, lank hair, fringed cravat and large round

round hat, stepped forward to wipe it off,—to hold volatiles to her nostrils, and to say, “Take comfort, Rosy; thee beest a great finner, Rosebud, but there is joy in heaven over a finner that repenteth; thee shan’t want for nothing living nor dead; thy girl shall share my shiners with little Phill.”

“Oh God!” cried Rosa, retreating towards where Lady Denningcourt was reviving, and hiding her face with both her hands,—“Oh God! my mother!”

“Yes, Rosa, yes, yes, yes,” cried Lady Denningcourt, folding her languid arms round her, “I am thy mother,—thy very mother!—come to my heart, oh thou child of instinct, of love! how has my soul doated on thee present, and languished for thee absent!—how has my vital blood acknowledged thee!—oh was that a form, a face, a mind to be exposed to the angry elements! and was my only child sent to beg a scanty morsel, while thy mother was decked in splendour! oh my brave brother! gallant noble Dungaron! dear broken-hearted fainted mother, and thou inexorable father, did ye behold

behold my child,—my innocent, beautiful child, the rightful heir of all your riches left to beg her bread from the niggard hand of common charity!—did ye behold this!—and are your angry spirits not glutted with vengeance!

“On Wallace! how has grief and remorse changed us both since last we parted; but my soul would not dare to greet thine, had I not such a mediatrix,—behold her, Wallace, my child and thine!—why does the hope of my life tremble? dearest girl, no longer Rosa, but Elinor.”

Rosa did indeed tremble; her respiration became difficult;—amazement chained every tongue most interested in this strange scene; the General, scarce daring to trust his senses, seated Rosa on a sofa by Lady Denningcourt, and without a quiet nerve himself, whispered her to be composed.

Rosa glanced fearfully at Mrs. Garnet, by whose side Mrs. J. Croak still stood, tears deluging the cheeks of the latter, while all the defeatures of guilt, in strong perspiration, stood on the brow of the former.

“Yes,

“ Yes, my child, once more look at that bad woman, and that innocent impostor ;—it is the peculiar trait of thy noble blood to forgive ;—I trust I do forgive them, but they are obnoxious to my sight.”

Mrs. J. Croak rushed forward prostrate at our heroine’s feet ; “ Oh !” she cried, “ pardon, pardon my mother ! I do not ask you to forgive me,—you know I am innocent ; even my nature, ignorant as I was of fraud, is innocent,—I felt I was indeed an impostor.”

Mrs. Garnet, who was in a dropsy, from a complication of disorders, had moved forward, and with the assistance of her husband, kneeled by her daughter ;—little Phill remembering his old favourite, though he dared not claim acquaintance, also ran forward, and put up his little hands,—“ Pray do forgive mammy,” he cried, “ she is your *name-sake*.”

Rosa, all amazement, knew not what to believe ; yet it was a solid truth, that she was clasped by turn in the arms of her patroness and in those of her patron ; she heard herself addressed

addressed by the most endearing epithets; the tears of the General and Lady Denningcourt blended with her own; she saw the most amiable of woman, throw herself suddenly on her knees; heard her adjure the General to join her in wonder, adoration, and thanks to that God which guided his sad wanderings to Penry; that opened his heart to the misery of his own and only child;—she beheld the anxious surprise in the fine countenance of Lady Gauntlet, and met the tender gaze of fond solicitude from her son; all this real,—yet how could it be? how could she who had so often felt the bitter pang of shame, for a parent's vices, who so clearly remembered the beggary from which she was relieved,—how could she believe herself the beloved child of one of the first, as well as best of women?—of her kind patron and benefactor?

But in the meanwhile her friend, her juvenile companion, was humbled to the earth before her; the woman, who, though she had been cruelly abandoned by her, she had considered as her mother, was in a dying state, yet kneeling, weeping, and begging pardon; —she

—she looked at Lady Denningcourt; all the soul of maternal tenderness was in her eyes,—all the energy of fond affection in her embrace: “Yes, Rosa, I comprehend the interesting expression of your eye,—you *are mine*,—Wallace Buhanun, him in whose praise I have delighted to hear you eloquent; he is your father;—compose yourself, we will have no secrets.”

“That you are mine, Rosa, I need no proof,” said the General; “your resemblance to this your noble mother, and the sound of your voice, so familiar and so precious to my aural faculties, first attracted and then rivetted my regard; yes, I *know*, I *feel* you are mine; but if we are to pardon this poor wretch, whom I perfectly remember, let us do it like ourselves,—you see her situation.”

Lady Denningcourt had seen her child,—seen the dear and natural resemblance of her Wallace accounted for, and she saw nothing else; but Mrs. Garnet was now not only lifted up, but seated on an arm chair, with her head resting on Mrs. Croak’s bosom.

“I cannot

“ I cannot help thinking this is all an agreeable vision,” cried Lady Gauntlet,—and though it was very seldom that lady was mistaken, yet it did happen just now,—for there was neither enchantment, nor (any more than in the General’s story) any thing unprecedented in the mystery Mrs. Moggy M’Laurin stepped forward, with great solemnity, to elucidate.

It will be seen, on recurring to the eighth chapter of the sixth volume of this famous story, that Mrs. Moggy M’Laurin hinted to the nurse who brought Elinor’s child to meet her at the milk-house, that the mother of her charge had “mickle filler;” that ten golden guineas confirmed the assertion, and that Mrs. Moggy M’Laurin explained the merke under the bairn’s herte, to be of her ain doing with gunpooder.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilkins were unfortunately both of them fond of liquor, and when things, as the poor penitent now confessed, were going to rack and ruin, then it was that she studied the process of marking with gunpowder. But though she succeeded tolerably
in

in the A B, she was obliged to make a splash, as if the outlines of the coronet had run together, for that was a sort of mark it was not so easy to imitate; though the fraud was successful—though she substituted her own child for the neglected infant whose “mither had sae mickle filler,” without suspicion—and though she saw it dressed and educated like a gentlewoman, she never knew a moment’s peace after parting with her own child; her unfortunate propensity to drinking increased; her husband the confidant of her iniquity was idle; instead of feeling compassion for the child they were so deeply injuring, every word she learned to speak, even her little wants reproached and provoked them,—and it was not merely starving but ill usage she suffered, till Providence threw her on the charity of her own father.

Mrs. Moggy M’Laurin declared that et wes the haundee woork of the Lorde thaut put et entull her hede tull tauk abooten Mefs Rosa, tull the gude weef, Maistress Broon, wha told her aw aboot a merke of a croon and twa letters, aun when she loked at et her sel,
aun

aun foond her ain merke, efter hauving allood the merke on the tother lassie,—gude Lorde ! she were leek tull dee, an culd nae rešte neet nore day, tull she ganged tull the sooth, tull Doctor Croak, wha ganged alang we her tull ain Maistress Garnet, who, pure bodie, was unco seek.

The truth was, Mrs. Garnet had made so many journies to Penry, under pretence of consulting the Doctor on her illness, but in fact to appease her conscience by a discovery of her guilt, that he suspected the truth before Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin appeared ; and as his daughter-in-law had testified an insuperable dislike to him at the same time she was conferring all sorts of benefits on his brother ; he, who knew no joy equal to revenge, was as eager to convince her she was the daughter of a beggar, as he had before been humble to Rosa.

Mrs. Garnet made an unreserved confession, and, as the least atonement for her guilt, readily agreed to accompany Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin and her daughter, of whom she grew doatingly fond, to Cumberland ;—and thus ends the history of the Beggar,—for the
acknowledged

acknowledged daughter of so rich a father and mother, and the affianced bride of an Earl, can no longer be considered in that light, and it is scarce necessary to say, that a double union took place at Delworth,—the same hour that gave the lovely daughter of General Buhanun to the enraptured Earl of Gauntlet, witnessed the re union of her parents.

The clothes, equipage, company, presentations, and all the long etcæteras of splendid marriages, would very decently add another chapter to this history, if it were not already too long.

The young lady readers are therefore at liberty to deck the fair bride in what clothes and jewels they please; they may give to the Earl all the raptures the most warm imagination can fancy; they may excite the admiration of one part of the world, and the envy of the other, to any excess; they may feed the hungry, cloath the naked, visit the sick, relieve the prisoner in a manner more feeling and generous than ever was done before, and be certain they cannot over-rate the magnificence, the tenderness, the popularity,

larity, or the charity of the Earl and Countess of Gauntlet;—but having left these important articles to the fancy of the young reader, the author concludes her history by a brief disposal of the other conspicuous characters.

Mrs. Croak, the foster-sister of the heroine, still possesses her warm affection; and after having seen the remains of her mother, who died at Delworth, decently interred, she returned to her own farm, with more riches than her husband or herself desired, and far more happy than she could have been at Athelane, though married to its heir.

Lady Denningcourt *did know* Wallace Buhanun; her last act, previous to her reunion with him, was an unreserved renunciation of all the property she possessed from the deceased Earl of Denningcourt in favour of his son, not even excepting the Jointure-house.

The Earl of Denningcourt's marriage had taken place before this acquisition of fortune; and as he immediately set off with his bride on a tour to Italy, it was never suspected
about

about Denningcourt that the beautiful young Countess was the former mistress at the castle; and it is, we hope, needless to add, that a constant harmony subsisted between the two neighbouring Earls and their families.

Admiral Herbert died the following year, full of years, peace, and honour, in the arms of his grandson and heir. Captain Seagrove, from the hour of his demise, became part of the Dowager Lady Gauntlet's establishment, who, though possessor of the Grange during her life and a constant summer visitor at her son's and Lady Elinor Buhanun's, fixed her home at Bath, on account of some spasms in her stomach, for which the waters were prescribed; and there meeting Mrs. Harley, she was so pleased with her lady-like manners and true goodness of heart, that an invitation, which coming from the noble Magdalena, must have been made with dignified sincerity, was accepted by that worthy woman: she still lives with the Dowager Countess of Gauntlet, and has every year the pleasure to witness with her the felicity of her beloved pupil—not, however, without feeling

feeling an equal interest in the more humble happiness of Mrs. J. Croak.

General Buhannun purchased the fine estate of Castle Lowder, in the neighbourhood of Lady Hopely, of the Earl of that name; and as he, with his amiable Elinor, made their native country their home, there really did appear no end of Betty's sufferings; for, besides, that John Brown, never so entirely dismounted from the high ropes as to forget how sick his yellow face made *some folks*, she was either obliged to live in that devilditch place Skutlun, or never have an ouse of her own; for John protested, that as God left *him* when he left his master, with whom he was always safe and happy, he never—no, never would be parted from him again.

The General's eyes filled with the soft rheum; he made John Brown his steward; and as there was annexed to this important office a pretty genteel *ouse*, not among the *riff raff*, between settling of fashions, displaying her knowledge of high life and visiting, Mrs. Brown contrives to exist with a tolerable degree of comfort,
for

for though an extraordinary glass of ale does sometimes bring up former sufferens, as John is a poor ignorant man, he don't mind it no more nor nothen.

Mrs. Buhanun^{*} grew again into importance, after her daughter became a Countess; Mr. Frazer resumed his former servility, and might have yet been a great gainer by his adventure in matrimony, had he not unfortunately been honoured with the title of father, by the one dirty female domestic he had kept at Castle Gowrand.

Mrs. Buhanun laughed at the affair; divorced her husband, and now lives at Castle Gowrand with her beautiful Jessy, wiser, and of course more respected, than ever.

Emma Buhanun, whom Rosa sent for to Delworth, recovered her health; and being introduced to the Athelane family, the disappointment and desperation of the despairing Angus, was so terrific, that within a few months, he, to the great annoyance of all the young ladies of his own clan, made a Buhanun the future Duchess of Athelane, with the full approba-

tion of that respectable nobleman, the Duke his uncle, with whom they now reside.

Doctor Cameron is still the noblest work of God, "an honest man," and he is also the most esteemed character of the world, "a rich one."

Mr. Steward has an appointment in the revenue, of considerable profit, besides his paternal inheritance.

Mrs. Moggy is returned to her ain wee hoose, tull tele aw her frinds the muckle farvice she did the clan of Athelane.

Lord Lowder had every possible disposition to divorce his wife, but the lady had only been convicted of *one faux pas*, whereas she could recriminate many on his Lordship; so the handsome Sir Jacob, after losing all his bets escaped to his mother, without being quite done up by heavy damages for crim con. so much wiser and better for his experience, that he totally discarded the Reverend Mr. Jolter, and married the sixth pretty daughter of the Rector of his own parish, by whom he has a large family of fine children; while the Countess spends the income her lord

lord cannot help allowing her, on whatever pretty fellow happens to strike her fancy; it is true, that by these indulgences she has now lost her beauty, her voice, and her health—but she will live all the days of her short life, notwithstanding—if *she can*.

The once beautiful Countess of Gauntlet, she who so lately was adored by the men, and hated by the women, could not support existence in an obscure part of Switzerland, without the aid of strong cordials, which, from renovators of her low spirits, became by excessive rapid poison: she died unlamented even by her own family.

The ci-devant Earl, with his daughters, and daughter-in-law, live abroad together on a handsome pension from the Earl, his injured nephew.

If any thing could put a young major of the guards out of countenance, Major Montreville must have blushed at the family anecdotes in public circulation; but as that is a thing totally out of nature, the major may be heard of as a prodigious dasher at

most of the gambling-houses and brothels about town.

Mrs. Woudbe has, by dint of her own assurance and her husband's credulity, got over the debts and the jewels, and threatens the town with a masquerade-ball, which will out-do all her former out-doings ; but as she is at this time deeply enamoured of a young actor, as vain and ridiculous as herself, it is expected Mr. Woudbe must at last be reduced to the necessity of turning his wife shifless out of doors.

Sir Solomon Mushroom dying intestate, and Mrs. Dorothy Wright having, by her premature visit, proved the illegitimacy of the two heiresses, Lady Mushroom would have taken quiet possession of his fortune, with the thirds of which she would have been content ; but the irascible Dolly got a caveat entered against the letters of administration, and by dint of labour and perseverance, at length discovered the next of kin to the late Solomon, in a cellar at St. Giles'.

Mr. Lemuel Supple undertook to see these poor people righted ; and accordingly,

after disputing the legality of Lady Mushroom's unconsummated marriage; after moving it from court to court, making giants, and then destroying them, he threw the whole business into chancery, and the probability is, that Mushroom-Place will, at some future period, be again sold under a decree of that court to pay costs.

Lady Mushroom had however, wisely taken care of as many valuable trifles as, when sold, added such comfort to her income, that having also the wisdom to retire to her house at Penry, enabled her to support her new rank in that village; and as she is known to be acquainted with three Countesses, and Honourables innumerable, nothing can be more the thing than her *Ladyship at Penry*.

Dr. Croak's practice falling quite off, as his chronic diseases encreased, Madam Bawsky began to think of her *conscience*, and having consulted her friend Mary the Buxum on the business, it was agreed, *nem. con.* that though it might be very pleasant to manage a country apothecary's house, beat his old mother, and banish all his relations,
while

while he could keep a carriage, and pay and receive visits from the quality of Penry ; yet that to live with a *poor* gouty old fellow, who could do neither one nor the other, was more suitable to an old garden woman, than a person of Mrs. Bawsky's refined ideas ; she accordingly made certain propositions to her husband, which being rejected, she accepted the invitation of her friend, to live with her ; and those amiable women, Mrs. Waltringham and Madam Bawsky, are united by such a congeniality of soul, that to this hour, they are laughed at, despised and visited by all the quality of Penry ; while the poor Doctor, glad now to recognize his relations, is boarded by his son with his good sister-in-law, whose philanthropy, happily for him, is unconquerable.

Madam La Croix is still in vast request among the higher orders of people who deal with French milliners, and sometimes carries a young friend to Lord Aaron Horse-magog's country villa, where that nobleman, in spite of debility and grey hairs, continues to be as amusing as ever. JA 59

F I N I S.

